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Summer Food Issue 2012

By Gustavo Arellano, Edwin Goei, Dave Lieberman and Shuji Sakai

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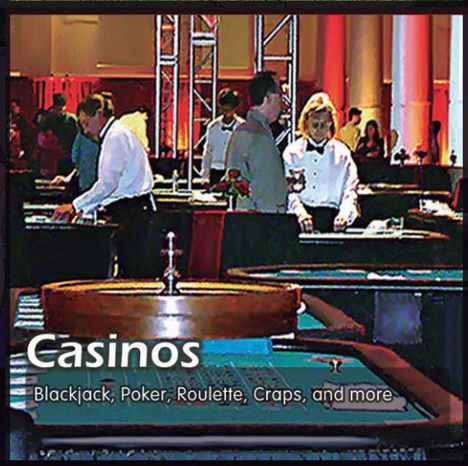

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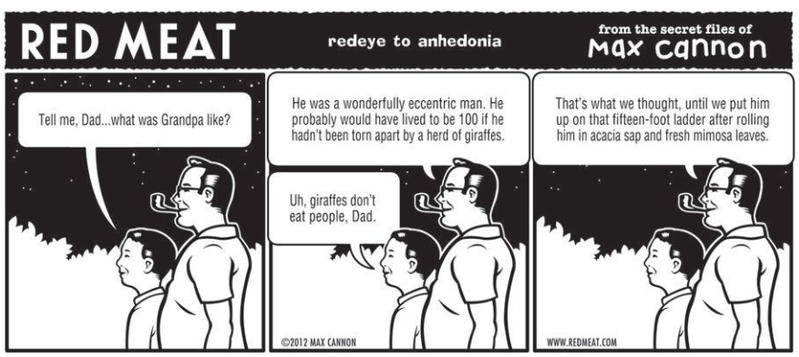

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A Veil of Vomit

Why is the OC Health Care Agency still covering up an April outbreak of E. coli at a local restaurant?

BY GUSTAVO ARELLANO

Every day, the website for the Orange County Health Care Agency's (HCA) Food Protection Program is updated with restaurant closures in what amounts to a digital version of Elizabethan-era stocks. Listed are the myriad reasons why a particular place didn't pass muster for the agency's inspectors, and reading through the reports offers a fascinating glimpse into the minds of modern-day food police, who seem less concerned about protecting the public from dirty restaurants and more obsessed with filling up as much of their arbitrary checklist as possible.

This summer, for instance, a Baskin-Robbins in Santa Ana was dinged because employees who handled food didn't carry a food-handler card, and a Pakistani restaurant was written up because "the sanitizer concentration in the wiping-cloth container" was too high, whatever the hell that means; last year, a Tommy's in Westminster got in trouble because "closed employee beverages were observed on the preparation table located next to the three-compartment sink"—i.e., workers were sipping soda on the clock. *Call the feds, Ma!*

Violating restaurants are not only posted online for public shaming, but the HCA also distributes a list to *The Orange County Register*, which publishes the names and addresses of the scofflaws weekly. The HCA also posts statewide food-recall alerts and offers guides on how to cook items properly, as well as other helpful hints, all in the name of transparency and public health.

And it's all a sanctimonious crock.

Sometime in April, nine customers at an Orange County restaurant got sick after eating lettuce laced with *Escherichia coli*, the deadly, dreaded bacterium better known as E. coli. The lettuce came from Amazing Coachella Inc. of Coachella, and their poisoned product also struck eaters in Canada, where the outbreak was a national story. The OC restaurant was the only other culprit; it closed for a couple of days, then opened, and that was that.

The name of the eatery? The HCA never revealed it to the public when the outbreak occurred, and it doesn't want you to know about it—now or ever. When you have local health officials who think proclaiming to the world that restaurant employees drinking soda in the workplace is more important than announcing an E. coli outbreak, the stench is ranker than a bag of onions left next to a water heater.

JARED BOGGESS

THE E. COLI COVER-UP WAS FIRST BROKEN IN JULY by Food Safety News, an online news agency run by the Seattle-based law firm of Marler Clark, which specializes in representing victims of food poisoning. It followed up on Aug. 1 with a story titled "Restaurant in E. coli Outbreak Gets Cover From OC Health," which featured HCA spokesperson Deanne Thompson saying that releasing the name of the offending restaurant would "not serve a useful purpose."

"That's a major inconsistency," says Food Safety News editor in chief Dan Flynn, who reported the story. "When you have nine cases of E. coli, that is a major incident. In my mind, it's no different than if you would accept a police department saying nine people got wounded, but since no one got killed, it's not going to say any more about it."

Flynn found out about the OC outbreak only by happenstance. In May, reports from Canada emerged that 18

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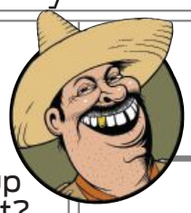

¡ask a mexican!®

»GUSTAVO ARELLANO

DEAR MEXICAN: I was in the bathroom stall at a taco shop and saw your racist dribble in *La Prensa San Diego* (the paper was being used as ass wipe, I guess). Whatever you say or write will always be foreshadowed by the fact that you and all the dark-skinned Mexis are *mosca en la leche*—that will never change. And for you to steal the statement "gentle readers" from Miss Manners shows just how inauthentic and uncreative you are. But we realize you are a Mexi; stealing anything (whether bicycles or prose) is embedded in the genetic code of your dirty culture. After I was done excreting, I used your column to wipe myself and threw it in the corner of the toilet stall with all the other soiled newspaper.

Roger Hedgecock's Biggest Fan

DEAR *GABACHO*: Your mom didn't teach you to wipe properly; you just smeared this column with your intellectual *caca*. And Judith Martin didn't invent the "gentle readers" shtick; hell, Jonathan Swift was dropping that couplet in *Gulliver's Travels*. I realize you're a *gabacho*, so getting basic history and insults wrong is embedded in the genetic code of that *raza*'s more *pendejo* members. Now make like a Yahoo, and dig for those nuggets!

DEAR MEXICAN: Let me start by telling you that, such as yourself, I'm a proud *mexicana* and how glad I am that someone so educated is trying to educate Know Nothings about things they think they know. My concern is this: I am a DREAMer, and I have come across so many stupid people who think they know what's best for us. I have heard it's never gonna pass, that we're just wasting our time, blah, blah, blah! What can I say to these Know Nothings to make them understand all we're asking for is a chance at what many of them have refused: to go to college and have a good paying job and/or to serve in the military. After all, is not this the land of opportunities? Land of the free, home of the brave?

An Orgullosa DREAMer Mexicana

DEAR PROUD MEXICAN DREAMER: Actually, I'm a *mexicano*, not a *mexicana*—not that there's anything wrong with that! As for what you can tell Know Nothings to make them understand your situation . . . they never will. Instead, tell them, "I told you so" by showing all the accomplishments undocumented youth have notched—college degrees, businesses, making your plight a national issue, one so big President Barack Obama has issued a stay on any deportations for *ustedes* (an imperfect gesture, for sure, but at least a start)—while supposedly powerless. Are these not the types of Americans we want, people who can stare into the abyss of hopelessness and emerge not only positive, but also productive? If you're supposed to make lemonade when life throws you lemons, DREAMers have created a *taquiza* out of nothing—and if Know Nothings want to ignore and demonize that, then they deserve the beautiful half-Mexican grandchildren coming their way pronto.

ASK THE MEXICAN

at themexican@askamexican.net, be his fan on Facebook, follow him on Twitter or ask him a video question at youtube.com/askamexicano!

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A Veil of Vomit

» FROM PAGE 8

people in Miramichi, New Brunswick, had come down with E. coli. An investigation by Canadian health officials determined the afflicted had eaten lettuce from a local restaurant and that the contaminated roughage came from Amazing Coachella. When those officials ran the particular E. coli strain through the Center for Disease Control's PULSENET (a network of laboratories that keeps a shared database of the biological markers of foodborne, disease-carrying bacteria), they discovered the same strain had infected nine people in Orange County.

The New Brunswick chief medical officer of health quickly announced the outbreak to the Canadian public as well as the name of the restaurant affected (Jungle Jim's Eatery), as did Canada's Department of Health. On June 29, the latter announced it had discovered the culprit—lettuce from Amazing Coachella—and that the same strain hit California. The Canadians alerted the California Health Department, even letting it know in private the name of the restaurant—but the California Department of Public Health (DPH) kept the information to itself. It wasn't until July, when Flynn called after connecting the binational dots, that DPH officials finally admitted the outbreak had spread to Orange County, telling the reporter that "Orange County [HCA] promised the restaurant wouldn't be named."

Flynn called the HCA for comment; Thompson said the restaurant wasn't named because it voluntarily closed and cooperated fully with the investigation. He says he was shocked by the HCA's recalcitrance.

"Three-quarters of local health departments in California release this kind of information routinely and quickly," he says. "The ones that don't [do it] get into logic that doesn't make a lot of sense. If I understand what [Deanne] said between the lines, this is probably a local single-ownership restaurant that wasn't a chain, so it was a local guy who cooperated with them in the investigation. That way, they can say there isn't any health threat, and there's no benefit in releasing the name."

> It wasn't until July that DPH officials finally admitted the outbreak had spread to Orange County, telling the reporter "[HCA] promised the restaurant wouldn't be named."

Food and Safety News is undeterred; last week, it filed a public-records request with HCA, demanding "the names and locations of any restaurant establishments associated with the outbreak" and "any summary health-department reports."

"We have always argued there could well be people who ate at that restaurant that got sick—maybe they were traveling in Arizona, got the symptoms, but since nothing else was going on, their doctor never submitted their stool sample [to health officials]," Flynn says. "If they would read somewhere there was an outbreak at a restaurant they were at, they would realize they [had contracted E. coli] and receive the proper medical help."

It's not as though the HCA hasn't previously dealt with E. coli cases. In 2007, 14 people contracted the pathogen after eating at a Souplantation in Foothill Ranch. Then, health officials not only announced the name of the restaurant almost immediately after realizing its role, but it also continued to alert the public via press releases and interviews with the media.

For the April 2012 cases, on the other hand, the only outreach HCA did was a confidential April 25 memo obtained by the *Weekly* issued to Orange County health-care providers warning, "We recently received an increase in reports of E. coli" and asking providers to send any "suspect or confirmed cases" to them.

HCA officials did not return the *Weekly*'s request for comment.

GARELLANO@OCWEEKLY.COM

HeyYou!

» ANONYMOUS

Karma Kats

BOX BROWN

To whomever set out poisoned food for the many feral cats around here: Words are not enough. As irritating as all those strays are, were, there is no excuse for such evil, repulsive behavior. Once, I had a cat who never hissed or scratched. He bit me once, tasted my blood, then got scared and felt real bad. Hs eyes were blue and he had silver hair, much like my father who has passed. I swear to you he understood most of the words I said. But now, because of you, he is dead. You murdered a member of my family, you sick jerk. Say hello to karma for me—because it will be coming for you.

HEY, YOU! SEND ANONYMOUS THANKS, CONFESSIONS OR ACCUSATIONS—CHANGING OR DELETING THE NAMES OF THE GUILTY AND INNOCENT—TO "HEY, YOU!" C/O OC WEEKLY, 2975 RED HILL AVE., STE. 150, COSTA MESA, CA 92626, OR EMAIL US AT LETTERS@OCWEEKLY.COM.

Tag-Team for Jesus

Chuck and Amy Battaglia run Brand New Life Christian Center with love and the rod

OCeeker
»JOSH DULANEY

Ashford and Simpson. **Bonnie and Clyde**. **The OCeeker** and his harem. Many fine guy/gal teams have become American legends. Add one more, ye heathen: **Chuck and Amy Battaglia** of **Brand New Life Christian Center** in Orange.

The OCeeker took in a **Wednesday**-evening service at the couple's fine fellowship, and boy, were the two solid. Solid as a rock. And the thrill is still hot, hot, hot.

Brand New Life meets in an office building on Taft Avenue, a stray police bullet from **Anaheim**. No door greeters met your **Alpha and Omega**, but that's no mind. The warm church body had several folks who kindly welcomed him into their sanctuary, including Chuck, who, if he weren't a preacher, would make a great 1970s **TV** cop, what with that cool name and all, plus a li'l bit of **Erik Estrada** in him.

In the sanctuary—with rows of chairs, burnt orange and taupe hues, a wooden stage, and Bible sayings on the walls—about 20 of the faithful gathered to hear from the Battaglias. Chuck, who had earlier introduced himself to the OCeeker with a manly handshake, took the stage first, dressed in dark jeans and a long-sleeved, kinda-**Hawaiian**-looking shirt of gold and tan hues. He updated the faithful on the doings of the **Lord** and asked the congregation to give a shout for "**Gentleman Josh**." The ol' OCeeker even heard a "woohoo!" or two. Chuck then introduced his helpmate, Amy, a slim and sexy blonde dressed in a black pant suit with a silver-bedazzled chemise.

Amy launched her sermon from **2 Corinthians 4:14**, which says, "Knowing that He who raised up the Lord Jesus will also raise us up with Jesus, and will present us with you." It was her aim to raise our faith, so that we could see all the blessings **God** has for us and become more **Christ**-like in how we live and love. She said the same spirit of faith that was in **Moses**, **King David** and **Jesus** is in us; we have been seated in a place of authority, next to Jesus, and **Satan** is under our feet.

"But a lot of us are hanging out at the lower level," the fairer Battaglia said.

God is calling us higher and higher, and in mentioning how Jesus commanded **Peter** to walk on water, Amy said God's commandments contain his enablements. She also asked a question many of ye heathen could answer in the affirmative: Are you higher than you were a year ago? To many an "Amen," Amy spoke seriously about not settling for mediocrity in our lives, though it seemed at times that a lot of responsibility was placed on the saints to just believe more in order to become more. But if we do, God will set us among the princes of the faith, Amy said. Even the generals. Those include, according to Brand New Life, televangelists **Kenneth Copeland** and **Oral Roberts**. Le sigh.

It was Copeland (whom my **Mexican in Chief** so memorably profiled years ago), whose eyes look as though they've been whiskey-painted, who once said God was like us, "a being that stands somewhere around 6-foot-2, 6-foot-3, that weighs somewhere in the neighborhood of a couple of hundred pounds, little better, [and] has a [hand] span 9 inches across."

Roberts had a bad habit of telling people that unless they gave him millions of dollars, God would kill him. He also said the devil showed up at his house and choked him.

Amy preached for about an hour, and then she tagged in Chuck, who didn't mince words about how to walk with God. "You have to want it," he said.

Chuck has a down-home preaching style, as though he's talking at you over a plate of chicken-fried steak. Forget the niceties and get ready to hear lines such as "You make your own problems" and "Don't get mad at me; I'm just trying to get you into blessing."

His sermon, which featured many a shout-out to your heavenly host, was peppered with a lot of "turn to your neighbor and say, blah, blah, blah." The OCeeker wondered at what point he would tell us to turn to our neighbor and say, "I do whatever I'm told."

Chuck spent a lot of time in **1 John 2:4**, wherein the apostle says those who claim to know God and yet don't follow his commandments are liars. He somehow connected it to word-faith healing, in which we should be able to tell sickness to be gone in Jesus' name.

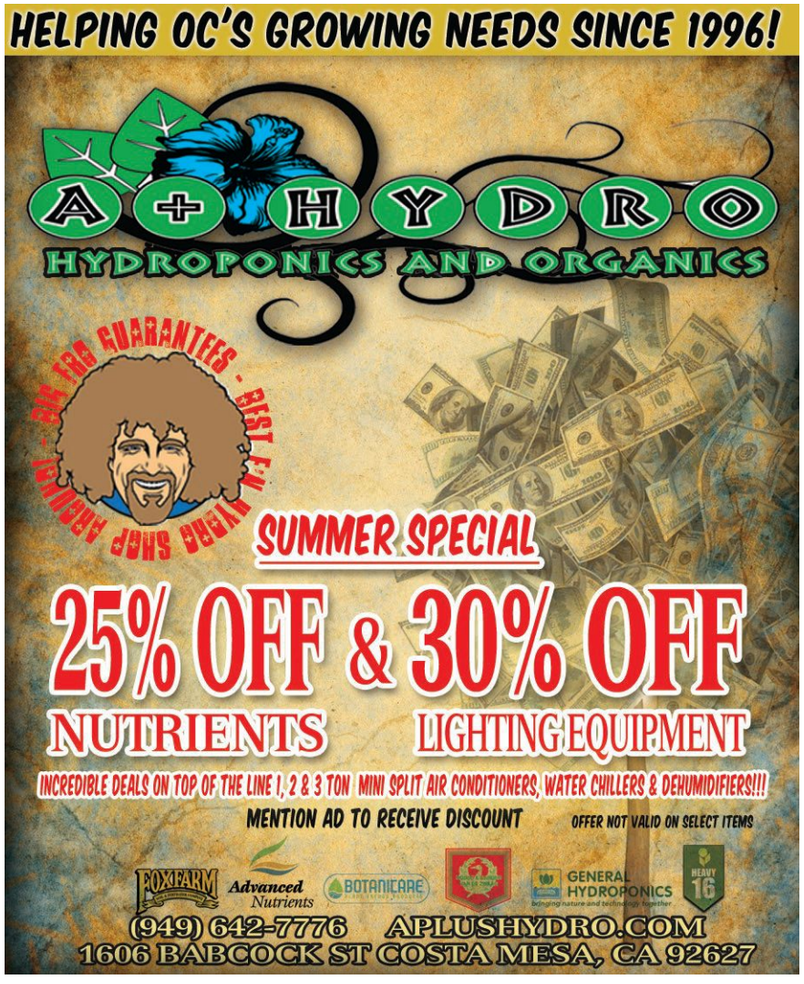
"When he died on the cross, he didn't just take your cancer; he took your meth, he took your pot, and he took your porn," Chuck said.

Sumbitch.

The OCeeker gave the dueling sermons two out of five fake healings. Long on love, but short on light, sounder doctrine in the hands of the Battaglias would make for an even greater church, one already marked by hospitality and a thirst for holiness. *From an Aug. 19 Navel Gazing post*.

LETTERS@OCWEEKLY.COM

BRAND NEW LIFE CHRISTIAN CENTER meets at 1110-B W. Taft Ave., Orange, (714) 974-7031; www.brandnewlifechurch.com.



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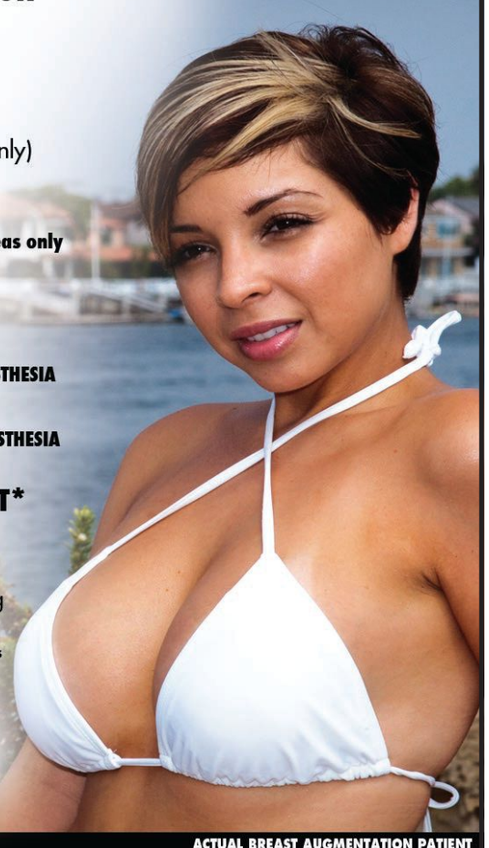

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The Mein Event

Noodles, noodles everywhere: OC's finest, from **spaghetti** to **ramen**, from **pho** to **spätzle**!

BY GUSTAVO ARELLANO, EDWIN GOEI, DAVE LIEBERMAN AND SHUJI SAKAI

PHOTOS BY **LP HASTINGS**

NOODLES AT LITTLE SHEEP

When doing a cover story about noodles, the first thing you need to do is get rid of all the bad headlines that quickly pop into your cliché-addled brain. "Oodles of Noodles!" "Noodling Around!" "Noodle Knowledge!" "My Life As a Noodle!" "Portrait of the Artist As Young Noodle!" Um . . . yeah.

One thing that isn't silly, though, is the concept. Next to meat and rice, the noodle is perhaps the most universal of entrées, endlessly customizable and more diverse than Santa Ana. Noodles can be dainty or hefty, as thin as gossamer or thick enough to tie down a mast. Slathered in sauce, or presented as a salad. In intricate networks, or steaming in soup. Vietnamese. Chinese. Italian. Peruvian. Jewish. And Orange County is chockablock with them.

We're not known as a noodle destination as much as we are for burgers and tacos, but that's only because we take them for granted. Fact is, OC worships the noodle, so we decided to highlight some of the best, in as many traditions as possible. And it's true: There's no chow mein entry. Call us a wet noodle, if you must. . . . Okay, we'll stop with the bad, and proceed with the good.

MÌ

Mì is the pride of central Vietnam, a noodle dish so perfectly balanced it causes intense homesickness in expats from Quang Nam. Springy rice noodles have been painted yellow with turmeric, then are tossed with shrimp, pork, sesame-studded rice crackers called bánh da, roasted peanuts, just a tiny bit of intensely flavored broth, and a host of herbs ranging from mint to shredded, lime-soaked banana flower. The dish is as much about the mix of textures as it is about the mix of flavors, and **Quan Hy** is where central Vietnamese expats go to get their fix. This place is also famous for its Latino waiters who speak better Vietnamese than second-generation Viet kiddies. *9727 Bolsa Ave., Westminster, (714) 775-7179.*

TALLARÍN VERDE

The American popular imagination pegs Peruvian cooking as one long riff on potatoes and ceviche, but the Andean country has a long multicultural tradition that sees African, Japanese, Chinese and Italian influences permeate its cooking. It's the latter that's the culinary ancestor of tallarín verde, which is nothing more than spaghetti noodles in a pesto sauce, but **DX Peruvian** livens it up with a heavier amount of ginger and soy. The Machu Pichu on this mass, however, is the perfectly breaded chicken milanesa, adding crunch and greasiness to an already-hearty meal. *3930 S. Bristol St., Ste. 107, Santa Ana, (714) 424-0014; www.dxperuvianrestaurant.com.*

KOUSHARI

Despite its closeness to Italy, Egypt's cuisine is pretty free of noodle influences, save for this gargantuan feast. It's the Egyptian equivalent of Rice-A-Roni: a pilaf of lentils and chickpeas topped with macaroni, spaghetti and enough fried onions to make a hamburger stand proud. You dump marinara sauce onto the plate, as well as a curious garlic sauce similar to an incredibly pungent vinaigrette, and it's like the whole Mediterranean Sea on a heaping plate. **Midran Al-Tahrir** was the first in the county to serve it, but it's such a great dish that other Arab restaurants are following suit and starting to break from their falafel-and-shish kebab handcuffs to feature it—mark our words, koushari will become the next hummus. *1324 S. Magnolia Ave., Anaheim, (714) 844-2515.*

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The Mein Event

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KASHA VARNISHKAS

KASHA VARNISHKAS

Ask any American Ashkenazi Jew of a certain age which carbohydrate makes them think of *bubbeh,* and chances are the response won't be matzoh or challah, but kasha varnishkas. Kasha are buckwheat groats (no, we don't know what a groat is either; it's akin to buckwheat barley) and varnishkas are bowtie pasta. The kasha is washed with egg and boiled, then mixed with sautéed onions and the pasta. It sounds simple, but it's great and very comforting. The only place in the county to get this taste of home is at Los Alamitos' **Katella Deli**. Try it with a chicken cutlet. *4470 Katella Ave., Los Alamitos, (562) 594-8611; www.katellabakery.com.*

BÚN

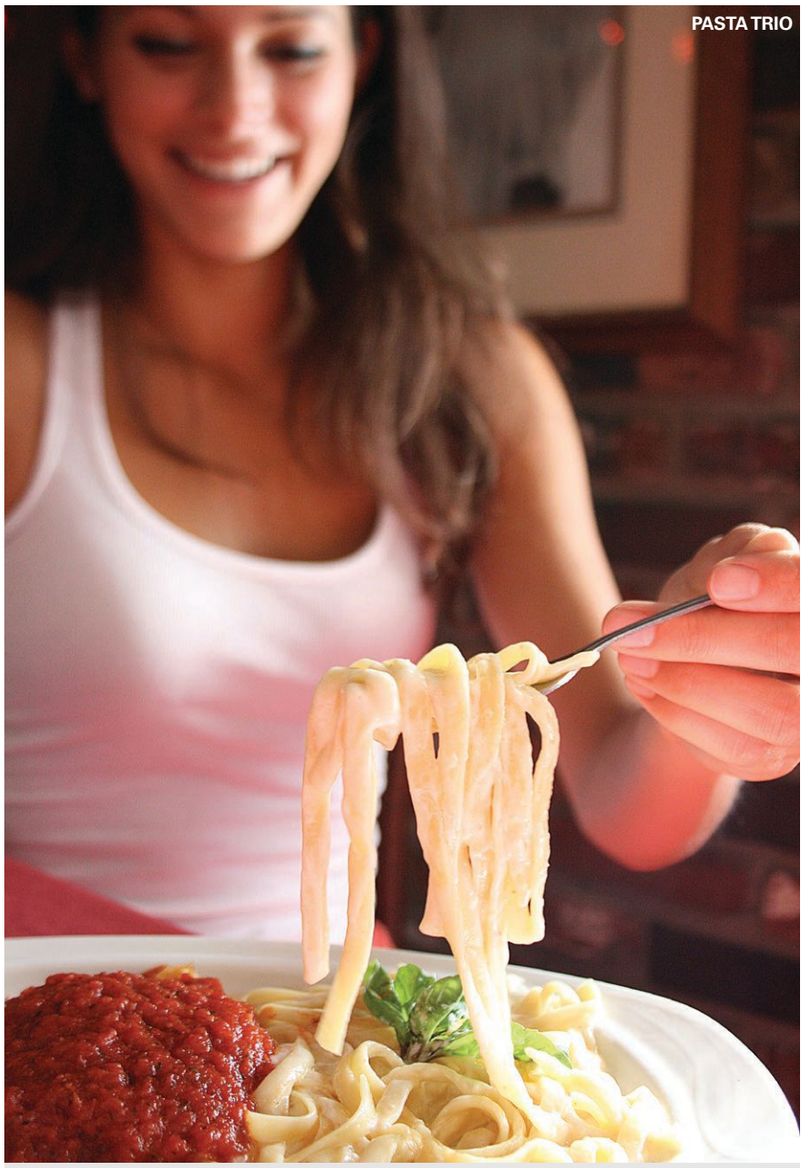
Of the various noodle dishes in the Vietnamese galaxy, bún is the most deceptively simple: vermicelli noodles, bean sprouts, lettuce, julienned carrots and your choice of toppings, all baptized in fish sauce—no more, no less. Helpful restaurants translate it into English as "noodle salad," but that gives the false impression it's a bunch of tasteless roughage thrown into a bowl. Bún is actually a nuanced, brilliant thing, filling yet light on the stomach, and the best version around is at **Dat Thanh**, famous in Little Saigon for its broken-rice dishes and magnificent nem nuong cuon. Get the one with the egg rolls, fried lengths of crispy goodness. *10032 McFadden Ave., Westminster, (714) 650-0910.*

SPÄTZLE

The dictionary says spätzle are dumplings. Nonsense! They're egg, milk and flour, and they're rubbed through a sieve and dropped into boiling, salted water until they float; any Italian or Chinese person would call them noodles. Noodles or not, spätzle are an indispensable, nutmeg-scented accompaniment to any braised dish in a German restaurant, right next to strong pickles and dark bread with sweet butter. At **Jägerhaus**, they're made with a mixture of flours that gives them the perfect snap, a texture retained even if you drench them in the meat gravy meant for your main dish. *Die sind sehr lecker! 2525 E. Ball Rd., Anaheim, (714) 520-9500; www.jagerhaus.net.*

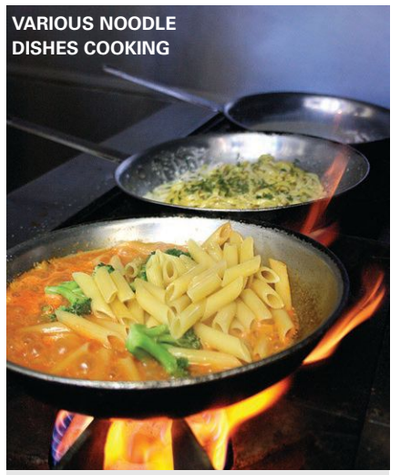
DAO XIAO MIÀN

Dao xiao miàn means "knife-cut noodles" in Chinese, and that's exactly how these thick, chewy noodles start life—as a giant rubbery ball of dough. While **Mas' Islamic Restaurant** is best known for its halal dishes, it also offers a great dao xiao miàn. Watch the *shi fu* (the chef) pick up a huge cleaver and flick enormous, triangular noodles into a wok of boiling water. Force yourself to not wince as he speeds up, the ball of dough getting smaller and closer to his hand. The chef then stir-fries the noodles with lamb and vegetables, giving just the slightest char to the noodles' edges. Try to stop salivating, then head back to your seat to scarf down an enormous portion of this Shaanxi specialty. *601 E. Orangethorpe Ave., Anaheim, (714) 446-9553.*


PASTA TRIO

SPAGHETTI

Anaheim can change, Anaheim can burn, Anaheim can turn from working-class white to majority Latino with a hell of a lot of Filipinos and Arabs thrown in—but everyone needs to eat Italian, so **Rufino's Ristorante Italiano** remains. The old couple that stood guard over tradition here for decades no longer owns the place, but you'll still find the duo leading eaters to their tables in a lovably gruff manner. And the spaghetti remains the same messy, tangy, tangle of love it has always been, complemented by the place's legendary house garlic bread. Don't believe us? Look at the crowd at any given moment—modern-day multicultural Anaheim at its best. *938 S. Euclid St., Anaheim, (714) 491-0880; www.rufinos.net.*


VARIOUS NOODLE DISHES COOKING

LINGUINE WITH CLAMS

Franco, the moody, irascible man known lovingly by workers at John Wayne Airport as "The Pasta Nazi," has long retired, selling off his eponymous **Franco's Pasta Cucina** at this airport-close food court. But his spirit and exacting standards are still present in masterpieces worthy of a thousand Mario Batalis, except served on Styrofoam plates next to a salad, garlic bread and a drink—all for about $10. The best has to be the linguine with clams, in which generous fistfuls of the bivalve are folded into a buttery concentrate redolent of garlic. The noodles are coaxed and caressed in a sauté pan to soak up this ambrosia, just as Franco would do when he ruled the Michelson Marketplace food court with an iron fist. *2222 Michelson Dr., Ste. 206, Irvine, (949) 852-4699; www.francospasta.com.*

DAN DAN MIÀN

Fuchsia Dunlop writes about men in Sichuan walking with pots of boiling water and trays of ingredients balanced on yokes across their backs, ready to make dan dan miàn, the region's legendary noodles. These days, they're restaurant fare more than street food, but the simplicity is still there; ground pork, chile oil, scallions and pickled mustard greens tossed with rice noodles. Somehow, those five ingredients—six, if they toss some chopped peanuts in—make a transcendent dish. And the best place to have this

» CONTINUED ON PAGE 16

OC WEEKLY BEST OF 2012

NOMINATE READERS' POLL

Best of OC Weekly Readers' Poll Nominations are going on Now! Nominate who you think is the Best of the Best in OC. The OC Weekly's Annual Readers' Poll gives Orange County residents the chance to sound off on who they think is the best in the county. Readers' Picks will be featured in the Best of 2012 issue that hits stands on October 11th. Make sure your top picks make the ballots. Nominations end on August 26th. Get your nominations in now! **Or go to www.bestofocweekly2012.com**

ARTS & CULTURE

Best Indie Band _____
Best Rock Band _____
Best Museum (Non-Art) _____
Best Art Museum _____
Best Visual Artist _____
Best Live Band _____
Best Punk Band _____
Best Indie Film Theater _____
Best DJ _____
Best Hip-Hop Act _____

DIVERSIONS

Best Nature Trail _____
Best Day Trip _____
Best Ride at Disneyland _____
Best Beach _____
Best Surf Spot _____
Best Golf Course _____
Best Gym _____
Best Casino _____
Best Bowling _____
Best Collective _____
Best Mud Run _____

FOOD & RESTAURANTS

Best Waterfront Dining _____
Best Sushi _____
Best Bagels _____
Best Diner _____
Best Chinese Restaurant _____
Best Dessert _____
Best Hamburger _____
Best Ice Cream _____
Best Italian Restaurant _____
Best Japanese Restaurant _____
Best New Restaurant _____
Best Restaurant When Someone Else is Paying _____
Best Thai Restaurant _____
Best Vegetarian/Vegan Restaurant _____
Best Vietnamese Restaurant _____
Best Outdoor Dining _____
Best Bakery _____
Best Brewery _____

FOOD & RESTAURANTS (cont.)

Best Coffee _____
Best Cupcake _____
Best Deli _____
Best Farmers' Market _____
Best Indian Restaurant _____
Best Middle Eastern Restaurant _____
Best Sunday Brunch _____
Best Mexican Restaurant _____
Best Restaurant _____
Best Taco _____
Best Burrito _____
Best Hot Dog _____
Best Late-Night Dining _____
Best Pho _____
Best Pizza _____
Best Seafood Restaurant _____
Best Coffeehouse _____
Best French Fries _____
Best Food Truck _____
Best Fish Taco _____
Best Taco Tuesday _____
Best BBQ _____
Best Wings _____
Best Pie _____
Best Sandwich _____

OC LIFE

Best Downtown _____
Best Sportscaster _____
Best Radio Station _____
Best Radio Personality _____
Best Blog _____
Best Newscaster _____
Best Weathercaster _____
Best Ducks Player _____
Best Angels Player _____
Best College Player _____
Best Coach _____
Best Hotel _____
Best Politician _____
Best Residential Neighborhood _____
Best Television Station _____

OC LIFE (cont.)

Best Trend _____
Best Party School _____
Best Place to Spot Celebrities _____
Best Cosmetic Surgeon _____
Best Way to Get a Pet _____

BARS & NIGHTLIFE

Best Club DJ _____
Best Punk-Rock Bar _____
Best Rock Club _____
Best Venue for Live Comedy _____
Best Venue for Live Music _____
Best Pub _____
Best Sports Bar _____
Best Bar/Club Night _____
Best Dive Bar _____
Best Gay Bar _____
Best Place to Pick Up a One-Night Stand _____
Best Signature Cocktail _____
Best Strip Joint _____
Best Lounge _____
Best Place to Play Pool _____
Best Happy Hour _____
Best Martini _____
Best Bar in Orange County _____
Best Margarita _____
Best Bartender _____
Best Beer Selection _____
Best Bikini Bar _____

SHOPS & WARES

Best Liquor Store _____
Best Place to Get Pierced _____
Best Tattoo Parlor _____
Best Comic-Book Store _____
Best Record/CD Store _____
Best Surf Shop _____
Best Used Book Store _____
Best Vintage Store _____
Best Shop For Brides-To-Be _____
Best Laser Hair Removal _____
Best Mall _____
Best Manicure/Pedicure _____

Cast your nominations here:

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The Mein Event

» FROM PAGE 14

FIESTA NOODLES

FIESTA NOODLES

There's a subclass of food the Filipinos call merienda into which pancit palabok falls. But this noodle dish, which is best described as Pinoy pad Thai, is more than just an afternoon snack. **Jollibee**'s pancit palabok (rebranded as Fiesta Noodles for Westerners who can't pronounce "pancit," let alone "palabok") is ready in a fast-food foam box when you order it. Required are satchels of prepackaged lemon juice. Pour at least four packets over the noodles, then stir it all together well before slurping up the annatto-tinged mass. In between the gravy-covered, hair-thin strands, there are ground pork, a few bay shrimp, some cut rounds of hard-boiled egg and a shower of crumbled pork rinds. Now you know why you need all that lemon juice. *605 N. Euclid St., Anaheim, (714) 635-0265; www.jollibeeusa.com.*

peddler's delight is **Chóng Qing Mei Wei**, a Sichuanese gem tucked in the corner of one of Irvine's Chinese plazas near the 99 Ranch store. *5406 Walnut Ave., Ste. C, Irvine, (949) 651-8886.*

BÚN MANG VIT

Duck noodle soup at a pho shop? Duck noodle soup at the best pho shop in Orange County? Well, if you're there on the weekends, yes; while **Pho Thanh Lich** dishes out delicious, unbelievably cheap pho, it's worth the extra few dollars to try the bún mang vit, a combination of roasted duck leg, thin rice noodles, and bamboo shoots cut and simmered until they're tender yet still crunchy. The noodles swim in a fairly standard, rich poultry broth, which just begs for all the doctoring with limes, herbs and chiles wonderfully endemic to Vietnamese food. *14500 Brookhurst St., Westminster, (714) 531-5789.*

TONKOTSU RAMEN

If you could liquefy a pig into a big bowl in a "Wonder Twins power, activate!" move, you'd have **Jinya Ramen Bar**'s rich tonkotsu pork soup. Though other ramen specialists in the county also make this, the recently opened Jinya by far draws the most richness and flavor into its pork extract. Perfectly cooked thin ramen noodles and always-tender slices of pork chashu; heaping spoonfuls of toasty, fried shallots and garlic; and most important, the most perfect still-runny-in-the-yolk soft-boiled egg in the business. You say you're not down with the swine? No problem. Jinya also makes an all-chicken version as rich as its pork soup, as well as an all-vegetarian ramen. *1450 Baker St., Ste. C, Costa Mesa, (714) 424-0377.*

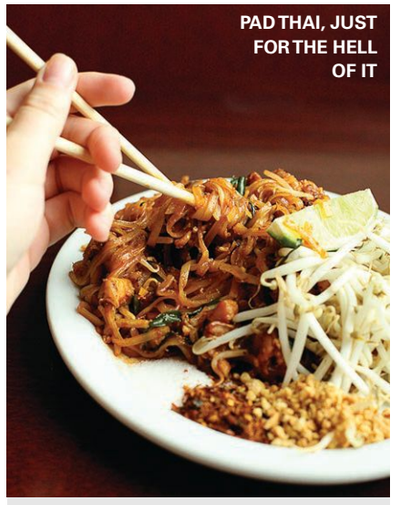
SOBA

You won't find many chefs who make their own buckwheat noodles in this country, let alone in Orange County. Irvine's **Fukada** is one such rarity. Served hot or cold, the perfectly al dente soba noodles can be ordered in several traditional Japanese variations accompanying a subtle dashi broth that tastes lightly of dried bonito flakes, kelp and soy sauce. Soba specialists also tend to be expert tempura cooks, as the two things go hand in glove. Fukada's tempura comes out lacy and crisp, the greaseless batter tasting subtly of the toasted sesame oil that's part of the fry-oil blend. *8683 Irvine Center Dr., Irvine, (949) 341-0111.*

LOBSTER PASTA

PAPPARDELLE BOLOGNESE

Too many people think of Italian food as overboiled, gluey pasta with sauce slopped over the top; try handmade pasta just once, and it'll change your entire way of thinking. Sadly, homemade pasta is harder to find in Orange County than you'd think, perhaps because it's labor-intensive. Fortunately, beachside carb-lovers have three branches of **Cucina Alessa** to choose from to get wide, soft egg noodles cradling a tender, meaty Bolognese that's more condiment than sauce. A little hit—just a little—of Parmigiano, and you'll never look at Olive Garden again. *6700 W. Coast Hwy., Newport Beach, (949) 645-2148; also at 520 Main St., Huntington Beach, (714) 969-2148; and 234 Forest Ave., Laguna Beach, (949) 497-8222; www.cucinaalessa.com.*


PAD THAI, JUST FOR THE HELL OF IT

PAD KEE MAO

Pad kee mao—literally "drunken noodles"—isn't actually on the menu at the venerable **Thai Nakorn**. While awesome, the menu is fairly short on noodles, but the kitchen staff will gladly make it if you ask—and you should because it's one of the best versions in the county. There's so much wok hei it tastes smoky, and the garlic, chiles, fish sauce, soy sauce and basil strike as though they're an assault. Order the dish with beef and savor the tug of the noodles against the wilted snap of the bean sprouts—the pure distillate of Thai street food. *12532 Garden Grove Blvd., Garden Grove, (714) 583-8938; also at 11951 Beach Blvd., Stanton, (714) 799-2031; www.thainakornrestaurant.com.*

PAD VOONSIN

Little Saigon's **Vientiane** is one of the few restaurants that serves the Laotian community. It will have Thai dishes as well as those from Laos, one of which is the glass-noodle dish pad voonsin. On the one hand, it's a simple wok-fried creation of glass noodles, vegetables and a meat of your choice, but the care in cooking each element quickly over a volcano-hot gas burner adds the slightly charred, lightly smoky character the Chinese call wok hei that makes this dish crave-worthy. *10262 Westminster Ave., Garden Grove, (714) 530-7523.*

BÚN CHA CA THANG LONG

Turmeric-rubbed catfish grilled on a ripping-hot iron platter with onions

» CONTINUED ON PAGE 18

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The Mein Event

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GARLIC NOODLES AT THE YARD HOUSE

and dill that's then mixed with fresh herbs, cool rice noodles and fried shallots. What's not to like here, especially on a steamy day when you want a light lunch? Normally, the cha ca Thang Long at **Vien Dong**, one of Orange County's oldest Vietnamese restaurants and one of the best Hanoi-style places in the county, comes with the fish, herbs, noodles and condiments kept separate, so you can build your own. The pre-made bowl, though, is cheaper, with a lot of fish, and is so convenient it's worth not building it yourself. *14271 Brookhurst St., Garden Grove, (714) 531-8253.*

KAKE UDON

The décor at **O-Udon** is sparse—just bowls of condiments (load 'em up!) and long tables. It doesn't matter; you're here for kake udon, those chewy udon noodles with a salty, savory sauce that will stick in your head for weeks. Kake means "splash," and the idea behind kake udon is to have so much sauce that eating the thick, slippery wheat noodles splashes sauce on the table. If you want to taste this treat, though, you'll have to come early; a limited number of orders of udon is made daily, and it generally runs out by the time the lunch rush subsides. *17870 Newhope St., Fountain Valley, (714) 427-0482; www.oudon.com.*

PAD SEE EW

Pay no attention to the chafing trays, the orange chicken and the food-court setting. Despite these incriminating details and the off-the-shelf name, **Thai & Chinese Express**' true calling is its made-to-order, street-hawker-style noodles. The pad Thai tastes like it came straight from Bangkok, but it's the pad see ew you should get. Since its components are rudimentary—Scotch tape-wide rice noodles, sweet soy sauce, beef, and something green and stalky—execution becomes everything. The bok choy, American and Chinese broccoli literally shines. The beef is plentiful and tender. And noodle ribbons render to edible silk. *2540 Main St., Ste. J, Irvine, (949) 724-1813.*

MIE AYAM

The Indonesians in Jakarta like noodle soups dry, with the broth segregated. And that's exactly how **Warung Pojok** does it. The mie ayam—the classic Chinese/Indonesian bowl of egg noodles—is lubricated in a flavorful, almost peppery oil, the whole crinkly nest topped with diced chicken and mushrooms, but the soup is served on the side, with beef meatballs called bakso bobbing as if they were buoys in broth. Eat the dish as separate entities. First, Hoover up the noodles, taking note of how well that seasoned oil

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OC WEEKLY

The Mein Event

» FROM PAGE 18

dresses the chewy strands. Then chase them with a sip of the soup and a nibble of a spring-loaded meatball, all the while slathering everything in sambal. *13113 Harbor Blvd., Garden Grove, (714) 638-8716; www.warungpojokindo.com.*

CHICKEN PHO

If beef pho is the Albert Pujols of Vietnamese soups, then chicken pho is the Mike Trout: the unheralded, better prospect. At **Pho Dakao**, cluckers are king (or queen, as it were)—it offers eight types of chicken pho, from some containing giblets, tripe and other offal to straightforward chicken soup that Red Staters would slurp up if they didn't know it came from the hands of a Vietnamese. The noodles become as fluffy and slurpable as the Campbell's of your youth. Best of all? The chickens come from a sister poultry store, meaning what you just ate was probably clucking that very morning. *15532 Ward St., Garden Grove, (714) 531-2009.*

HU TIEU COMBINATION NO. 1

Do not be alarmed. That piece of fried chicken is supposed to be in your bowl of noodle soup. **Pho Crystal Noodle House** will drop the hunk of crisply fried poultry in the liquid, a place the Colonel has never gone before. It will get tangled in the still-chewy strands of noodle and soak in the sweet, sugary broth that tastes distinctly of pig. It will be joined by char siu, steamed shrimp and a frilly leaf of slowly wilting lettuce. Some lemon squeezed into the bowl will round off the sweetness and have the bubbles of fat go skittering off. Go ahead and pluck out the chicken, then gnaw the meat from the bone. Lick your fingers if you have to—isn't that the point of fried chicken? *3037 S. Bristol St., Santa Ana, (714) 668-1312.*

CHAO CHOW RICE NOODLE

Bowls of **Trieu Chau**'s Chao Chow Rice Noodles aren't for the faint of heart. A close sibling of pho, but really more Chiu Chow Chinese than Vietnamese, this is a noodle soup's noodle soup. You'll find hulking, inelegant chunks of liver and cleaver-hacked pieces of roasted duck. As such, spitting out bone fragments isn't frowned upon, but rather expected. The best part is the gelatinous flaps of duck skin, one component in a protein-laden bowl chock-full of shrimp, meat balls, fish cake and a lean hunk of pork. But as with all soups such as this, it's all about the broth, here a marvelously hot, glorious, mouth-filling nectar wrung from the soul of bird, hog and probably MSG. *4401 W. First St., Santa Ana, (714) 775-1536.*

BÚN RIEU

If pho is masculine, with beef balls and a musky broth wrung from ox bones, bún rieu is elegant and feminine, with its powder room at **Quan Hop**. Unlike pho noodles, the bún in bún rieu caresses the tongue in feathery wisps. You don't chew bún; you allow it to melt. The delicate, clear soup is rimmed with a chile-red rouge resembling a courtesan's lips and contains floating cubes of congealed blood cake. Figure-eight patties made of minced shrimp are as pink as naked skin. Search for the sea snail nubs, which chew softly with a thrilling finish. The loosely packed crab meatballs disintegrate in your mouth gentler than a lady's kiss. Also in the bowl will be a set of boiled tomatoes—supple, plump and perky. Do you get where we're going with this metaphor? *15640 Brookhurst St., Westminster, (714) 689-0555.*

TONKOTSU RAMEN (AGAIN!)

Ramen Yamadaya's tonkotsu ramen is pure hog concentrate, culled from pig bones simmered for 20 hours to unlock all the collagen as well as all of its piggy potential. The end product is a soup closer to motor oil than broth. If the noodles, egg and slices of roasted pork weren't there, the liquid alone would still constitute a heart-stopping meal. Splatter from it will leave oil stains on your shirt. Get the kotteri, and you'll see a floating stratum of fat purposefully ladled on top as if it were liquid frosting. A red-spicy version of the broth spoons up as though it were thick Malaysian laksa, since it's so hearty. If there's a ramen soup so substantial it renders the noodles inconsequential, it's this one. *1175 Baker St., Costa Mesa, (714) 556-0091; www.ramen-yamadaya.com.*

UNI SPAGHETTI

Uni is one of earth's greatest taste treasures. Crack open the *Sputnik*-like sea creatures, and you find one of the most naturally delicious ready-to-eat things the ocean produces. It has a sweetness akin to the richest egg yolk and a texture that is texture-less. At sushi bars, it's cuffed around a belt of nori or laid down on a ball of rice; but at **Cafe Hiro**, it's dissolved into sauce to coat strands of al dente spaghetti, creating a dish similar to those served on the Italian coast of Puglia. Since chef Hiro Ohiwa is a fusionist, he adds a crowning dollop of wasabi, a few wispy shreds of nori and some bread with which wipe up every precious, ocean-flavored drop. *10509 Valley View St., Cypress, (714) 527-6090; www.cafehiro.com.*

MAMI

You'll never see a noodle soup broth more evocative of chocolate milk than in the bowls of mami at **Mami King**. The brownness comes from the slow-braised hunks of beef, which are not unlike the tender chunks of Taiwanese niu rou miàn, except here, they're so sweet it's as though they were lacquered in caramel. The sugary bent of the braised meat bleeds into a broth poured on hot as though it was the moat of hell. This is a soup so scalding it overcooks the thin egg noodle. Below the liquid depths and strands of starch, you'll uncover even more of that tender beef in never-ending quantities along with shredded white-meat chicken and a few pork-stuffed wontons that prove this Filipino noodle soup, as with others on this list, is Chinese in origin but eminently customizable—the ultimate immigrant. *6901 La Palma Ave., Buena Park, (714) 521-0108.*

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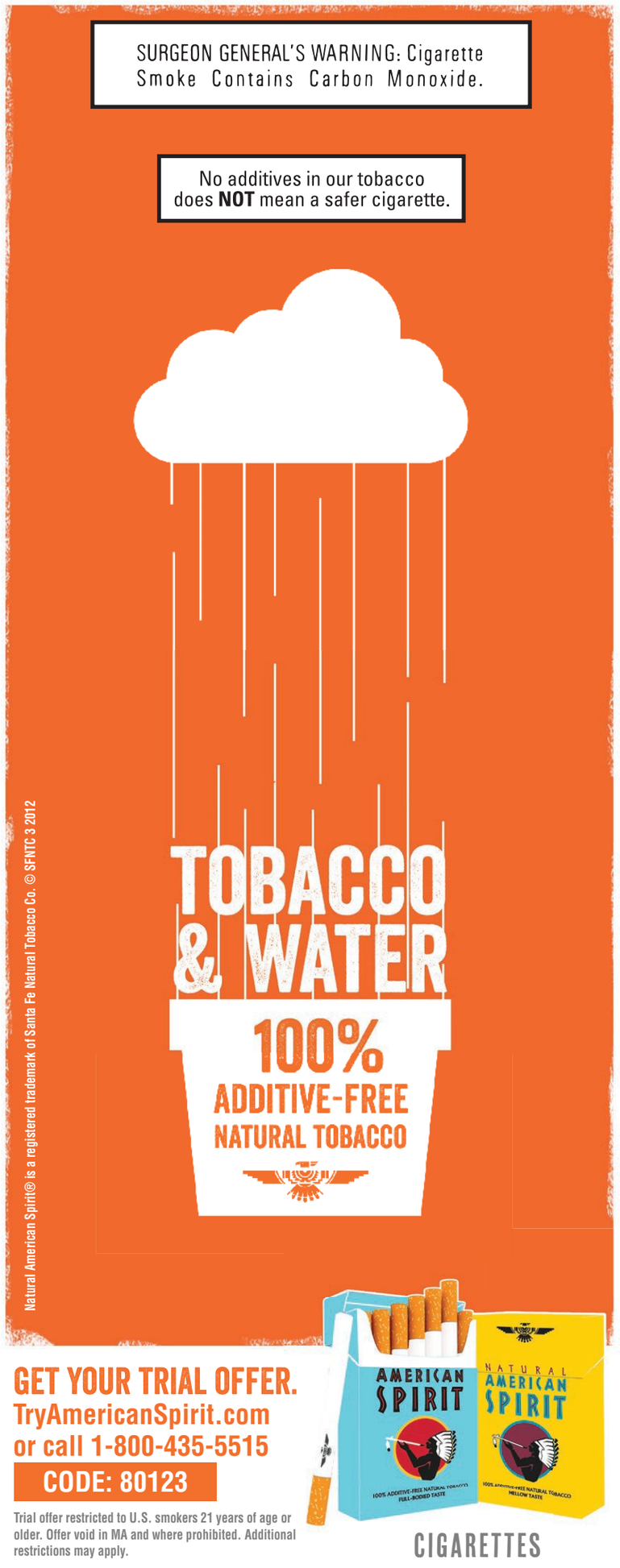

fri/08/24

[CONCERT]

EN FUEGO
GIGANT3S

Three Latino superstars—Marc Anthony, singer/songwriter Marco Antonio Solis and international pop icon Chayanne—come together to shake the walls of the Honda Center with soulful singing and sensual hip swinging—or maybe that rumble is actually coming from the legions of hormone-charged, screaming female fans. (Have you *seen* Chayanne? Have mercy!) But what's really juicy is that this event sets a historical precedent; it's "the first time three leading artists of their genre will come together for a major tour"—less than two weeks after Anthony's ex, Jennifer Lopez, made a very similar claim when she and Enrique Iglesias hit the same Anaheim venue. Well-played, Marc, well-played.

Gigant3s with Marc Anthony, Marco Antonio Solis and Chayanne at the Honda Center, 2695 E. Katella Ave., Anaheim, (714) 704-2400; www.hondacenter.com. 8 p.m. $60.50-$376. —ERIN DEWITT

[CONCERT]

Brace Yourself
The Shrine

Some might call them Thin Lizzy plus Black Flag, but they call themselves Psychedelic Violence. The long-haired, acid-dropping weirdos of the Shrine come to Alex's Bar this week, and we are so, so ready. If you love the wild guitar riffs of the '70s and the manic thrashing of '80s punk, as well as maybe the untamed aesthetic of '90s metal, the Shrine are all that wrapped in a trashed van reeking of smoke. Check out their new release, *Primitive Blast*, which is exactly as dirty and raw as it sounds. They're loud, they're fun, and they're completely badass.

The Shrine with Dirty Ghosts, Zig Zags and Kicking Spit at Alex's Bar, 2913 E. Anaheim St., Long Beach, (562) 434-8292; www.alexsbar.com. 9 p.m. $8. 21+. —ERIN DEWITT

ALEX JOHN BECK

saturday>
TWIN SHADOW CASTS SOME LIGHT

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SUNDAY
FRIED BANANA SANDWICHES FOR EVERYONE!

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COMPLETELY OBSESSED WITH WES ANDERSON

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THURSDAY
THE MOST DAUNTING TASK OF ALL: STANDUP COMEDY

*calendar

sat/08/25

[CONCERT]

Love Song
Free Moral Agents

Some bright stars of Long Beach come to play at, well, one of the bright stars of Long Beach: Free Moral Agents at the Prospector. Now in year nine of their existence, Free Moral Agents are in steady stride with a permanent lineup and a solid reputation as one of the most fascinating, progressive, cerebral bands in the area. If you still haven't immersed yourself in 2010's *Control This*, then you're way overdue. Consider this intimate show a rare chance to redeem yourself.

Free Moral Agents with Bobby Blunders, Milky Way and DJ Virginia Slim at the Prospector, 2400 E. Seventh St., Long Beach, (562) 438-3839; www.prospectorlongbeach.com. 9 p.m. Call for price. 21+. —ERIN DEWITT

[CONCERT]

Flashback
Twin Shadow

Twin Shadow is one man—George Lewis Jr.—and one big sticky blob of '80s resurrectionism, taking a shred or two from bands such as Grizzly Bear (whose Chris Taylor produced Lewis' last LP) and maybe Caribou to dress up unadulterated love for the newest and waviest of the new wave. The Smiths, Adam Ant, Flock of Seagulls—believe it or not, they all did Peel sessions, and that's what Twin Shadow is doing, too, balancing extra-synthesized synth-pop with critical adoration from the usual indie gatekeepers. His new LP, *Confess*, is destined for mixtapes and movie soundtracks. See him now so you can say you swooned to him back when.

Twin Shadow with Poolside and Mini Mansions at the Glass House, 200 W. Second St., Pomona; www.theglasshouse.us. 8 p.m. $12-$14. All ages. —CHRIS ZIEGLER

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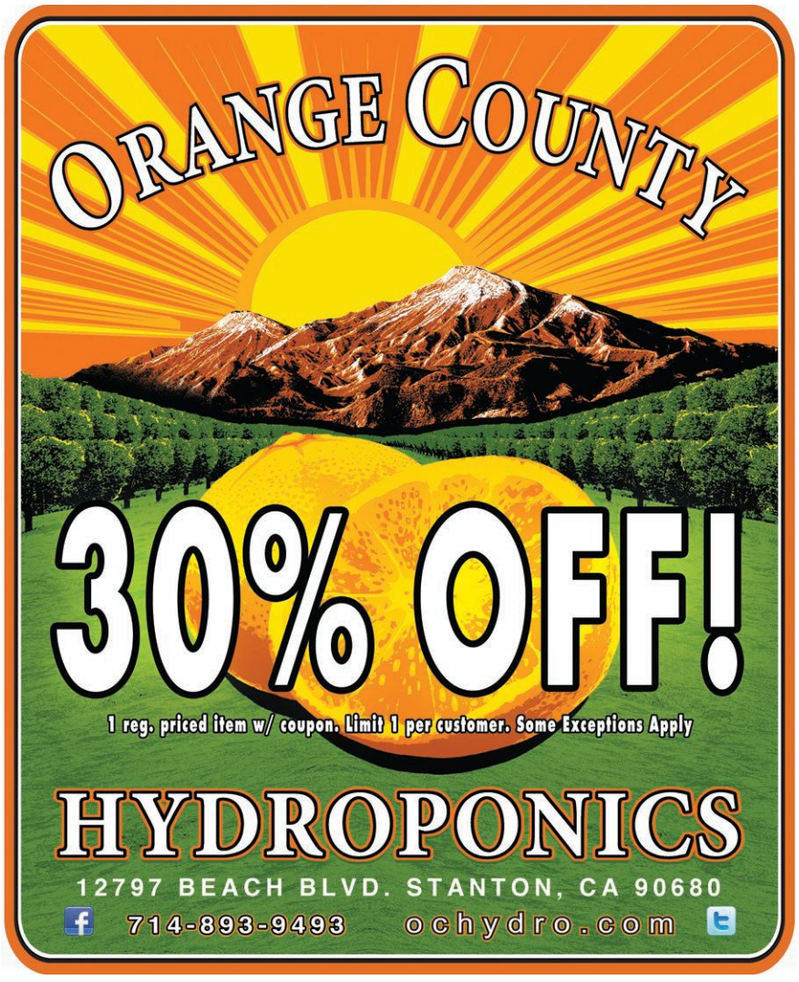

sun/08/26

[FESTIVAL]

Sequins and Capes

ELVIS FESTIVAL

The king of rock & roll, magic hips and all, comes back from the dead for one day only, as the Orange County Fairgrounds (California's Graceland) hosts the 13th annual Elvis Festival. But whom are we kidding? Elvis never died—he has been alive in our hearts this entire time! (And his death was a hoax, obviously.) Celebrate the life of this cultural icon during the full-day Elvis-thon featuring tribute artists (including the beyond-awesome, 4-foot-3-inch Mini Elvis), an Elvis trivia bee, Elvis fan clubs, a singing contest and—the most fitting tribute of all for the late, heavy Presley—a King of Sundaes ice-cream-eating contest. Don't be cruel. Surrender. It's now or never. Are you lonesome tonight?

Elvis Festival at OC Fairgrounds, 88 Fair Dr., Costa Mesa, (714) 708-1500; www.ocfair.com. 9 a.m. $2. —AMANDA PARSONS

[THEATER]

Curtains Up

Fifteen Men In a Smoke-Filled Room

Kicking off the start of the 2012-13 theater season, Long Beach Playhouse hosts a series of eight never-before-seen plays from its New Works Festival finalists. Of the more than 100 scripts submitted from playwrights all over the country, these are the best of the best. Come sit in on one of the staged readings and provide the author with thoughtful feedback. This Sunday, the spotlight will be on Collin Crowley's *Fifteen Men In a Smoke-Filled Room*, the story of Warren G. Harding as he discovers he is destined (or doomed) to become the Republican presidential nominee. *Fifteen Men* questions just how much destiny influences our lives and looks at the troubled, destructive role we play in our own fate.

Fifteen Men In a Smoke-Filled Room at Long Beach Playhouse, 5021 E. Anaheim St., Long Beach, (562) 494-1014; www.lbplayhouse.com. 2 p.m. $10. —ERIN DEWITT

mon/08/27

[CONCERT]

Making Noise

Decode Radio

Gritty, electronic pop-rock duo Tyler C. Burns and Eric Stoffel round out their Monday-night Detroit residency this week—and if you've yet to witness the epically charged live set these two produce, this is your final warning. The group's first release, *The Death Rattle EP*, is an ambitious debut, full of heavy, gravelly lines, dark undertones and ballad-worthy vocals—it's the way electro feels in the crux of a rager. Decode Radio is catchy and edgy in an '80s Goth-pop kind of way, and we're definitely interested in seeing what their sophomore effort will entail. Catch them in Costa Mesa right now, then keep an eye out for where they land next.

Decode Radio at Detroit Bar, 843 W. 19th St., Costa Mesa, (929) 642-0600; www.detroitbar.com. 9 p.m. Free. 21+. —ERIN DEWITT

tue/08/28

[CONCERT]

Be Easy

Ghostface Killah

Ghostface Killah plies his trade well; no one cuts loose and sounds off like this man. The Wu-Tang capo is trusted to exert all of his humanly energy on one verse, but Ghost spent a lifetime retooling the mechanics of language. So what if his lyrics aren't printable on a marquee? With Ghost, part of the fun is that he communicates via head-scratching soliloquies untranslatable to any mortal tongue. Even 2010's impish, self-spoofing *Apollo Kids*, which often sounded similar to a Blowfly tribute album, had about 12 "holy fuck" moments that brought his flair for narrative and free association into sharp focus. These songs have Ghost pushing fishscale by the dock, outrunning lawmen and outgunning "rebel niggas wildin' in the streets of Liberia."

Ghostface Killah at the Observatory, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana, (714) 957-0600; www.observatoryoc.com. 8 p.m. $20. —MT RICHARDS

In my wallet is a tattered Fat Tire label which I've had for 11 years. Ever since my first one, I immediately fell in love with this refreshing ale and the company's eco-conscience ways. Amongst friends, this label has led to many discussions such as,

"Is it possible to jump a recycling bin on a banana seat bike?"

(Yes, but next time don't pedal so fast!) Thanks Fat Tire for making recycling and biking so much fun.

Frances M. of South Carolina

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[CONCERT]

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Down the river, by the sea and into the golden years of this country's musical history, we go on an acoustic journey that honors an element as close to the American core as apple pie, baseball and tax evasion—folk music. This sing-along, theater-style concert guides the audience through years of American folkloric sounds, lightly peppered with historical details about folk's evolution from the backwoods of Appalachia to the nightlife of New York and San Francisco. Don't miss this musical adventure featuring the best songs spanning across generations such as "Puff, the Magic Dragon," "Can the Circle Be Unbroken?" and "This Land Is Your Land."

The Lonesome Travelers at Laguna Playhouse, 606 Laguna Canyon Rd., Laguna Beach, (949) 497-2787; www.lagunaplayhouse.com. 7:30 p.m. Through Sept. 2. $40-$60. —YASMIN NOUH

[FILM]

Truly Fantastic

Fantastic Mr. Fox

In another installment of the Canvas Shop's Wes Anderson Wednesdays, the Seal Beach retail/art-studio space is screening *Fantastic Mr. Fox*. Based on the Roald Dahl children's novel, the 2009 film tells the grandiose story of Mr. Fox stealing food from three wealthy farmers to feed his family; when the farmers get fed up with his thieving antics, they try to kill him but are outwitted by the animals, who find a new, convenient way to survive underground. This gorgeously detailed animated film—featuring such famous voices as George Clooney, Meryl Streep and Bill Murray—is shown in the back yard of the Canvas Shop, so bring a lawn chair and snacks as you enjoy this warm summer night with the rest of the Anderson-obsessed community.

Wes Anderson Wednesdays: *Fantastic Mr. Fox* at the Canvas Shop, 702 Marina Dr., Seal Beach, (562) 493-6563; www.canvasshopsb.com. 8 p.m. Free. —JESSICA FORD

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thu/08/30

[COMEDY]

Funny People

Bert Kreischer

To those with fancy-schmancy cable, he's Bert the Conqueror from the Travel Channel, but Bert Kreischer also attempts what many consider the most daunting task: standup comedy. He got off to an impressive start during an extended stint in college, when *Rolling Stone* declared him "the No. 1 party animal in the nation." After that prestigious honor, he went on to host various television shows, including his own standup special titled *Bert Kreischer: Comfortably Dumb*. Check him out in Irvine this week as he headlines a bill that also includes Barbara Gray, most notably of the monthly Space Boners show at LA's Silverlake Lounge.

Bert Kreischer and Barbara Gray at the Irvine Improv, 71 Fortune Dr., Irvine, (949) 854-5455; www.improv.com. 8 p.m. $20. —ERIN DEWITT

[CONCERT]

Farewell to Summer

FLIGHTS & SOUNDS SUMMER FESTIVAL

The OC Great Park wants you to "dance your way into Labor Day" at the last of its free summer concerts. First, let crime-fighting supergroup the Aquabats surf you into their New Wave/ska hybrid hemisphere, where no evil, corporate pop earworms can survive. And the next day, take a jump-and-jive time trip to the days of finely crafted tunes and curvy, velvet-voiced vixens with Lavay Smith and Her Red Hot Skillet Lickers for some heinously hot swing to rival any late-summer heat wave. It's red, white and blue meets red, hot and blues, baby—a perfect way to cure your hip-hop heebies.

Flights & Sounds Summer Festival at the OC Great Park, Sand Canyon Avenue and Marine Way, Irvine, (949) 724-6247; www.ocgp.org. 8:15 p.m. Free; parking, $10. —STACY DAVIES

L.P. HASTINGS

SOUTH COUNTY SUPPER

Suburban Splendor

Urban Kitchen Grill & Wine Bar is an indie in Foothill Ranch's land of chains

BY EDWIN GOEI

There are still some of us in OC who can't locate Foothill Ranch on a map, or we think there's nothing there besides row after row of squat office parks, faceless warehouses and cookie-cutter tract homes. It's the model of modern suburbia, the section of Orange County where everything is so new that what's not part of a national chain is part of a local one. This is why California Fish Grill and Chick-fil-A are two of the top five restaurants recommended by its own Yelpers.

Enter Urban Kitchen Grill & Wine Bar, an eatery with a title that's aspiring and also a little ironic, such as naming a pocket dog Cujo. It isn't even in the center of town, where all the other restaurants are, instead standing in what passes for the boonies, wedged between the umpteenth Wahoo's Fish Taco and the millionth Starbucks in one of those one-off business islands built to serve the surrounding offices, which, in this case, includes an aluminum company and some sort of electronics firm. To say that Foothill Ranch needs a place akin to Urban Kitchen isn't exaggerating at all—a co-worker of mine who lives there still swears by Outback Steakhouse. So it's reassuring to have walked into Urban Kitchen on a recent Saturday night to encounter a 10-minute wait for a table, with a crowd that I can safely assume constituted locals.

What you notice first is a kitchen framed by a simple mural of a city skyline. If it didn't have a dining room lit by tea lights, you'd assume this was some sort of New York-style deli or pizzeria. You can take a counter seat facing the cooks, but there won't be much too see except their floating heads—the stove and all of the action is hidden behind a tall divider. But even before you arrive, you know it will have a mac and cheese, a burger and pastas on the menu; this is the type of place that sticks to the tried-and-tested. But what you won't anticipate is that the mac and cheese has the good stench of Gruyere; that it's topped with crisp, crumbled prosciutto; or that when you take a forkful, the cheese trails off in honest-to-goodness stretchy webs as though you were eating a pizza.

And there's the white-meat chicken strips that top the buttermilk-fried-chicken salad—a salad that also features cucumbers, pumpkin seeds, dried cranberries and actual cornbread torn into chunks. I expected stock fried-from-frozen chicken fingers, but what I encountered was pieces of hen hand-breaded and fried delicately, resulting in something so moist that actual juices burst forth. Get this salad over the salmon version, which ends up being sodden and boring, despite what seems to be a pound of grilled fish squashing flat a bed of greens.

Two steaks are offered, one sauced with cognac and cream, the other a demi-glace. But better and 10 bucks cheaper is a grilled pork chop as thick as the King James Bible. If you dare, the pig hunk can be cooked to a pink medium. It'll be served with homemade, dice-sized cubes of roasted potatoes and a chunky, caramelized apple sauce so assertive of cinnamon and tangy it's able to match the fleshy chew of the pork, bite for bite.

Despite the prosciutto-wrapped, gigantic grilled shrimp, you should skip the underseasoned, slightly overcooked pasta. And if you get the scallops, don't bother with the entrée option; opt for the one on the small plates list instead. With a ring-molded stack of jasmine rice, just-ripe mangoes, avocado and pickled radish arranged into flower petals, it will be the same dish, except $8 cheaper for two scallops instead of three. Urban does it exactly right, with the butter-bathed sea cylinders seared to crispy brownness nearly all the way around and cooked perfectly through the middle. Be aware that though the fish and chips is also found in the small plates section, it's a full meal on its own. Three bloated fish fingers battered not too thickly and fried into golden cocoons are dropped into one of those metal cones with a mess of shoestring fries and two dipping sauces, one of them beguilingly addictive.

Speaking of addiction, Urban Kitchen recently added a deep-fried, cookie-dough dessert. If you think it sounds like something you'd find at the OC Fair, you're right. Two golf ball-sized morsels of nuts, oatmeal and chocolate are breaded and fried, then served on a plate with vanilla ice cream. The dish is so good you almost want to tell the waiter who describes it as a deep-fried version of BJ's Pizookie that the dessert and, in fact, the restaurant are much better than that.

URBAN KITCHEN GRILL & WINE BAR
27412 Portola Pkwy., Ste. D, Foothill Ranch, (949) 340-2055; www.urbankitchengrill.com. Open Sun.-Thurs., 11 a.m.-9:30 p.m.; Fri.-Sat., 11 a.m.-10 p.m. Dinner for two, $30-$60, food only. Full bar.

HOLE IN THE WALL
» GUSTAVO ARELLANO

Love, Chinese-American Style

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10078 Adams Ave., Huntington Beach, (714) 378-8612; www.eggrollking.com.

Despite this county's bounty of regional Chinese restaurants, at which eaters can gorge on Mongolian hot pots, preserved eggs, beef dishes packed with enough chiles to warp a bridge, or enjoy a day of dim sum served by carts that never stop and change goodies every five minutes—despite all this, sometimes I just want orange chicken.

I don't give a damn about the authenticity games—I fell in love with the dish in high school, adore each nugget's crunchy skin and reddish hue, all bathed in a treacly sauce that seems more starch-derived than anything citrus. So every couple of months, I used to trek to Hot Wok in Fullerton, where I first encountered the dish as one of the many entrées in a buffet that has always been patronized more by Mexicans than any other ethnicity. It's a decades-long ritual because there's no need to seek out orange chicken anywhere else: It's the Top Ramen of Chinese food, satisfying and only satisfying at its absolute best. But that has changed after I stumbled upon Eggroll King in Huntington Beach, one of those great Chinese-American restaurants stuck in a grocery-store-anchored shopping plaza at which the clientele is made up of locals, none of whom is an Asian immigrant, and the décor is Ming Dynasty via the San Gabriel Valley.

The orange chicken here is spectacular: fat chunks of chicken breast that remain moist even within their fried shells, that actually have a slight tang. Sure, the sauce glazed on each piece as well as its hosting plate is as thick as ketchup, but it's also spicier than it should be and includes long, gnarled dried chiles—which means it's awesome. Order the dish at lunch, when you also get a mound of white rice, the namesake eggroll (hefty, oily, steaming—and great), a bizarre wonton that seems to contain only sautéed onions, and the obligatory fortune cookie and dried noodles that you drag through Chinese mustard and sweet-and-sour sauce.

It's the orange chicken of my dreams, but Eggroll King is more than this or other Chinese-American classics. The hot braised tofu is straight out of Diamond Jamboree, fierce and filling; the house special soup is a murky cauldron of beefy glory; and the pan-fried dumplings are house-made. They're great, but I almost always stick with the orange chicken. Though it'll never become a foodie craze, that's all right: Sometimes, we just want orange chicken, hold the snobbery.

GARELLANO@OCWEEKLY.COM

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STANDING ON THE DOCK OF THE BAY

LP HASTINGS

Christmas In August

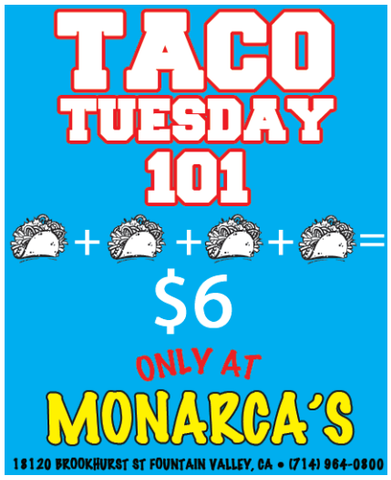
Arthur Gonzalez of Roe Restaurant & Fish Market

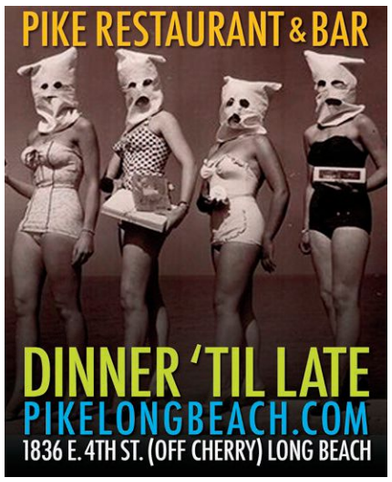
A couple of chairs flipped right-side-up in the middle of a gutted dining space—that is how we roll with chef Arthur Gonzalez in his unfinished room, also known as Phase Two in the grand scheme at Roe Restaurant & Fish Market in Belmont Shore.

Your earliest food memory:
My mom's potato pancakes and my grandma's mole.
Favorite meal growing up:
Hamburger and fries. We ate so much at home that it was such a treat to go to McDonald's. I went to school with sardine sandwiches. Do you remember Eddie Murphy in *Delirious*, when he talked about homemade hamburgers? I just wanted McDonald's. I also like In-N-Out double doubles, animal-style.
Your best recent food find:
Smoked Oaxaca red chile—Melissa's Produce turned me on to it, but I'm not sure where the retail consumer can get it.
Where was your most recent meal? What did you have?
Hakata Ramen Shin-Sen-Gumi. I had the Hakata Ramen & Takana fried rice with spicy miso.
Was your dream concept to build Roe in phases?
It just happened that way; the market space was pretty much ready to go—the restaurant needs a whole new look.
Culinarily speaking, Orange County has the best:
Vietnamese food. I go to Pho 79. When I walk in with my girlfriend, the staff know what we like. I go to get specialty ingredients from the grocery stores. It's actually one of the most intriguing cooking cultures to me that I'd love to explore a lot more.
Tell us about the next phase.
It's going to be a fish-focused, chef-driven, season-cuisine restaurant with a raw bar. Although we will have original dishes, the menu will be made up of global cuisine that is constantly changing with what is available and in season. We will have a full bar and will focus on a mixology program. We would also like to offer a Saturday and Sunday brunch that is still seafood-focused with a "kickback" beach environment.
Okay, some of your dishes need explaining: Fish dip? Soy egg?
French fish dip is a play on the classic French dip sandwich, only we use fish, caramelized onions and tarragon on a toasty baguette, and you dip it in our Bad Ass Bisque instead of au jus. Soy egg is a hard-boiled egg marinated in soy and mirin.
We read something about Kangen water?
Kangen water is alkaline water. It restores proper Ph levels in your body. It also cleans our vegetables and hydrates our fish.
Favorite chef?
Eric DiStefano—he really took me under his wing when I started with him. Then, when we were both confident in my abilities, he gave me responsibility and locations to manage on my own. He not only allowed me to grow, but he also made *sure* that I did.
You worked with the Aquarium of the Pacific; we don't suppose you've crossed paths with Andrew Gruel and Jethro Naude of SlapFish?
Yup, I actually worked with them on their food truck. I met Andrew when he was the director of Seafood for the Future. I think very highly of them and what they're doing.
One food you can't live without.
Chile. I love spice; it gets your blood flowing. And you don't always have to use it for spiciness. I have six different chiles in the back that aren't even spicy. The Oaxacan chile has a smoky flavor that chipotle doesn't have. Melissa's will be here next month, roasting Hatch chiles.
Favorite places to eat:
Pho Hung Phat in Long Beach, Empanadas Place in Venice Beach, Coyote Cafe in Santa Fe.
You were a firefighter previously. Tell us about that life and your career change.
I started as a paid call firefighter. That's

» CONTINUED ON PAGE 33

ON THE LINE
» ANNE MARIE PANORINGAN





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A Gold Medal for Taste

MVP's gets past kitschy sandwich and burger names to reach the good-food finish line

LONG BEACH LUNCH
» SARAH BENNET

With the Olympics finally over and Long Beach athletes earning more medals than most countries, it seems appropriate to debut this column with MVP's, a sandwich-and-burger stand built right on Fourth Street, with a menu full of sports-themed items such as the "Patty Day Melt" and "The Mean Joe Greene" that are more than their kitschy names.

The concept of naming food items after athletes, coaches and other sports celebrities might get a little hairy (Harry Caray, perhaps? Sorry I had to sneak that one in, but I'll be here all week!), but MVP keeps it clever by creating dishes that manage to make sense with their namesake. The "Greg Louganis," for example, is a pita bread filled with chicken, lettuce, tomato and tzatziki sauce—a reference to the gold-medal swimmer's adoptive Greek-American parents. The "Shaq" burger, meanwhile, includes double meat, double cheese, double bacon, avocado and dressing—presumably for Shaq-ish-level hunger.

There are also salads named after skater Dorothy Hamill and a burrito called "Jorge Campos" (somebody please tell management that the current Mexican soccer player who thrills Mexis so is Chicharito, not the long-retired goalkeeper), but it's MVP's standard line of one-third-pound burgers (called George Foreman I through VI) and sandwiches piled high with a variety of fresh meats and veggies that make the best midday fare. I tend to go for "The Ditka" ("For Bear-ish appetites!"), which is basically a turkey sandwich with a bunch of greens on squaw bread. If I'm feeling particularly adventurous, I'll get it on sourdough and ask for the Cajunaise sauce from the burgers on the 'wich instead of mayo. You can also get it on the side for dipping MVP's Cajun-seasoned fries into.

Ah yes, MVP's fries: last year's Best Of choice and a crucial add-on to anything on the menu. The plain fries are decent here, but it's the aggressively Cajun-seasoned ones that are worth eating too many of in one sitting and dealing with the burnt-taste-bud consequences later. Five Guys' Cajun-style fries are no competition for MVP's homemade goodies, but beware that a "half order" at MVP's is plenty for two people (lest you end up with a greasy, brown bag full of them in your fridge for a week afterward).

Keep in mind this place is a shack in the owner's front yard that can only fit three employees max, so be prepared for heavy wait times during busy hours and a street-parking situation to match. Ordering to-go is a common practice, too, but why would you want to do that when you can eat on one of MVP's two outdoor patios and people-watch the hell out of Fourth Street?
From a Aug. 15 Stick a Fork In It post.

MVP'S GRILL & PATIO
3701 E. Fourth St., Long Beach, (562) 439-0809. Cash only.

Christmas In August

» FROM PAGE 31

where I figured out I had a knack for cooking, as a rookie in the kitchen. At 26, after hurting my back on duty, I tried a few different sales jobs, but ultimately, I had the urge to cook.

Hardest lesson you've learned:
Don't procrastinate.

What's your favorite childhood memory:
Being up in Crestline at my grandpa's cabin with my mom and sister. I love the outdoors. We would spend the whole summer there. Every morning, I would have to do my chores: chop wood and feed the chipmunks. And then I could do whatever I wanted.

What were you five years ago?
Moving back from Santa Fe, working at McKenna's On the Bay.

How did you meet general manager Vanessa Auclair and your business partner Paul Nikolau?
I met Vanessa while trying a new chapter in my life in Santa Fe. I worked at her favorite restaurant when she snagged me. Paul is the owner of the property and now my partner. He is the one who gave me the opportunity to fulfill my dream of opening a restaurant.

What would you be doing if you weren't in this business?
I'd be a rock star. Something a little Sublime-ish. I used to carry their equipment into shows. Eric Wilson, the bass player, came by the first few days we were open and was checking it out. I went up to him and said, "You don't know who I am, but I know who you are. You're one of my favorite bands. I carried your equipment probably 15 years ago, and I'd be honored to have you sit down." And he said, "Right on."

In a small way, I think music and food go hand in hand. I've always worked in open kitchens. It's kind of like a stage. At the end of the night, when people talk about how great you cooked that night, it's like applause.

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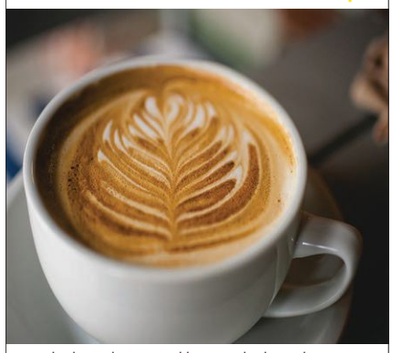

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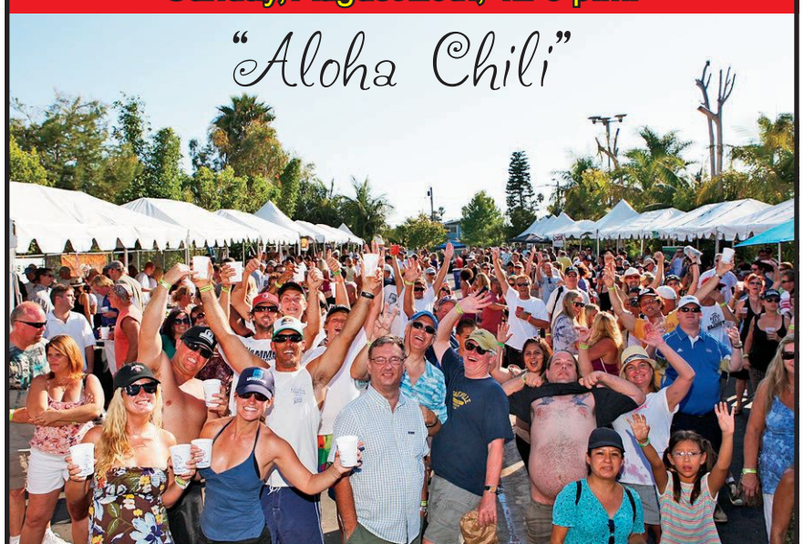

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The Cola Hog

Cola-Braised Pork at Haven Gastropub

SHUJI SAKAI

EatthisNow
»SHUJI SAKAI

It might be fair to say the chefs at Haven Gastropub have a hard-on for pork. Witness Haven's roasted, whole-hog parties. Witness the participation earlier this month in Pig Out 1.0. Witness also the cola-braised pork with smoked, creamed sweet corn.

Large cubes of spice-rubbed pork shoulders are browned and simmered in a reduction of cola and brown ale until the pork takes on a dark crust that resembles the bark on long-smoked barbecue, but without the smoke. It's somewhere between southern barbecue and sweet-savory, long-simmered Japanese buta no kakuni, and the smoke that would seem so appropriate to the dish actually comes from the creamed corn.

Fresh niblets of sweet corn are stripped from the cob, and those cobs are simmered in cream to steep their sweetness and flavors. The hotel pan full of creamed corn is then smoked to give the dish a backyard-grill-roasted profile that enhances and balances a dish that's on the sweet side. You won't have long to try it, however. We hope the cola-braised pork sticks around after local sweet corn season ends, but it's going to be a challenge to find a side dish as well-paired with the pork. *From an Aug. 13 Stick a Fork In It post.*

HAVEN GASTROPUB
190 S. Glassell St., Orange, (714) 221-0680; www.havengastropub.com.

DrinkoftheWeek
»GUSTAVO ARELLANO

Sky High Manhattan at Stubrik's

A great Manhattan needs to be like Mariano Rivera at his finest: not particularly brash or flashy, but dependable, august, urbane and strong like a motherfucker. It doesn't do well with modifications outside of different brands of bourbon, vermouth and bitters—this ain't a margarita or martini. So when I first espied the Sky High Manhattan at Stubrick's in Fullerton, I was skeptical. They did right with the Maker's Mark 46 (which has a sweeter finish than its mother hooch), the Angostura bitters and Vya vermouth—but adding St-Germain? That elderflower liqueur that's been the rage in hipster bars whose drinks veer toward the sweet side, mixing it up with a bold Manhattan? Seemed like that brief segment in *The Simpsons* when Bart and pals did a spy mission in Shelbyville, and Nelson and Martin were paired up—an *Odd Couple* of disastrous, fey-macho proportions.

But, as with most new food mixings I take an immediate skepticism to, I was wrong.

THE DRINK

Stubrik's remains my go-to steak place, not just for the fine, affordable cuts of meat, but also because I've been celebrating my birthday there with the guys I grew up with for more than a decade. Your basic Manhattan structure is there in the Sky High, but the St-Germain adds another layer of sweetness—and, of course, another layer of booze, which is probably where the name comes from. One is as potent as a Rivera-cut fastball; two, and you begin reminiscing about downtown Fullerton, when Stubrik's was the only great restaurant around and the Reagan Years and the Hub were next door instead of the Slidebar Cafe. Three, and you start swearing that your high-school ex is playing pool upstairs—not that you care, of course, but did I tell you guys about the time she made out with our boss, and I nearly kicked his ass? Not that I care, of course. Four? Floor! *From a Aug. 17 Stick a Fork In It post.*

STUBRIK'S
118 E. Commonwealth Ave., Fullerton, (714) 871-1290; www.stubriks.com.

OC WEEKLY
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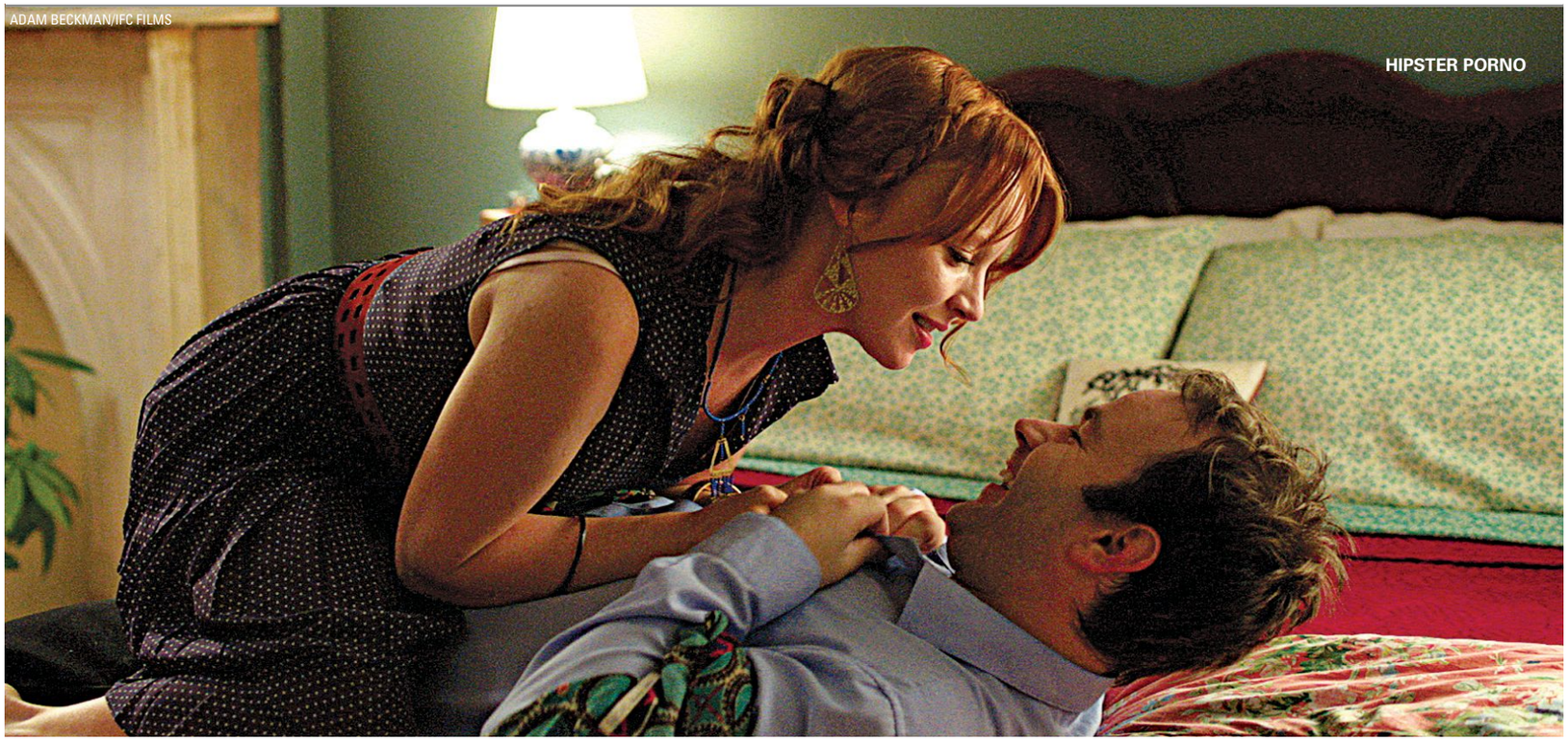
ADAM BECKMAN/IFC FILMS



HIPSTER PORNO

This American Spin-Off

Sleepwalk With Me can't quite rise to the level of radio

BY KARINA LONGWORTH

It's pretty Pollyanna-ish to complain when companies that are in the business of making money on movies make certain movies solely to make money. And yet, it seems to be widely acceptable to be cynical about big-budget movies that are made, marketed and released in order to sate an appetite that already exists in the culture. But what about smaller movies made to capitalize on a pre-existing brand? This is what I wondered last week after watching a YouTube video in which *Avengers* director Joss Whedon, in an unconvincing deadpan, suggests a boycott of *Sleepwalk With Me*, an adaptation of an autobiographical one-man show by comedian Mike Birbiglia previously excerpted on *This American Life*. Birbiglia and *This American Life*'s Ira Glass are credited as screenwriters of *Sleepwalk* the movie, Glass is one of the film's many producers, and Birbiglia both stars and is its co-director.

Disparaging *Sleepwalk* as "this independent, heartfelt little movie that's not only about the human condition, but also based on true events and is also interesting and fun," Whedon declares, "We shouldn't be watching these little, tiny films that people really care about and work on for years [on] end. We should be nurturing corporate spectacle, like good Americans."

This was all tongue-in-cheek, obviously, and even the trades got the joke. When Birbiglia and Glass issued a "response" video in which they do the math to figure out how many people would need to see their movie to outgross Whedon's, *Hollywood Reporter* touted the new clip as "the next stage in a jokey viral-marketing scheme for the indie feature."

"Jokey" is not the same as "funny"; the former is an estimation of intention, and the latter is a judgment of execution. It's the perfect word for the dueling viral videos; the muddled movie they promote is, if anything, not jokey enough.

Birbiglia plays a version of himself, Matt Pandamiglio. Matt is the kind of hapless young man who has so much trouble keeping himself alive that he can't hope to thrive, and among his friends and family, this difficulty has calcified into a joke. But he's not that young anymore—his forehead is spiked with the micro-bangs of the modern comb-over—and his longtime girlfriend, Abby (Lauren Ambrose), is pushing for marriage. A would-be standup who hasn't written a joke since college and moons over working comics from behind a bar, Matt is clearly not ready for adult commitment, but he's also afraid to break up with Abby because she's obviously too good for him. This emotional quagmire's inevitable resolution is delayed when he lucks into a string of comedy gigs on the road.

Matt's idle thoughts are funnier than his actual jokes, an irony noted by Marc Maron in a cameo as more or less himself. Their encounter encourages Matt to start telling the truth about his own life onstage, which means revealing to audiences full of strangers the feelings he'd never reveal to his girlfriend. The road becomes the place where he can free himself of the albatrosses of past failure and the scary finalities of the future awaiting him at home. But what he has repressed returns at night: Matt's increasingly bizarre dreams, drawing on the themes and anxieties of the day, are accompanied by increasingly dangerous bouts of sleepwalking.

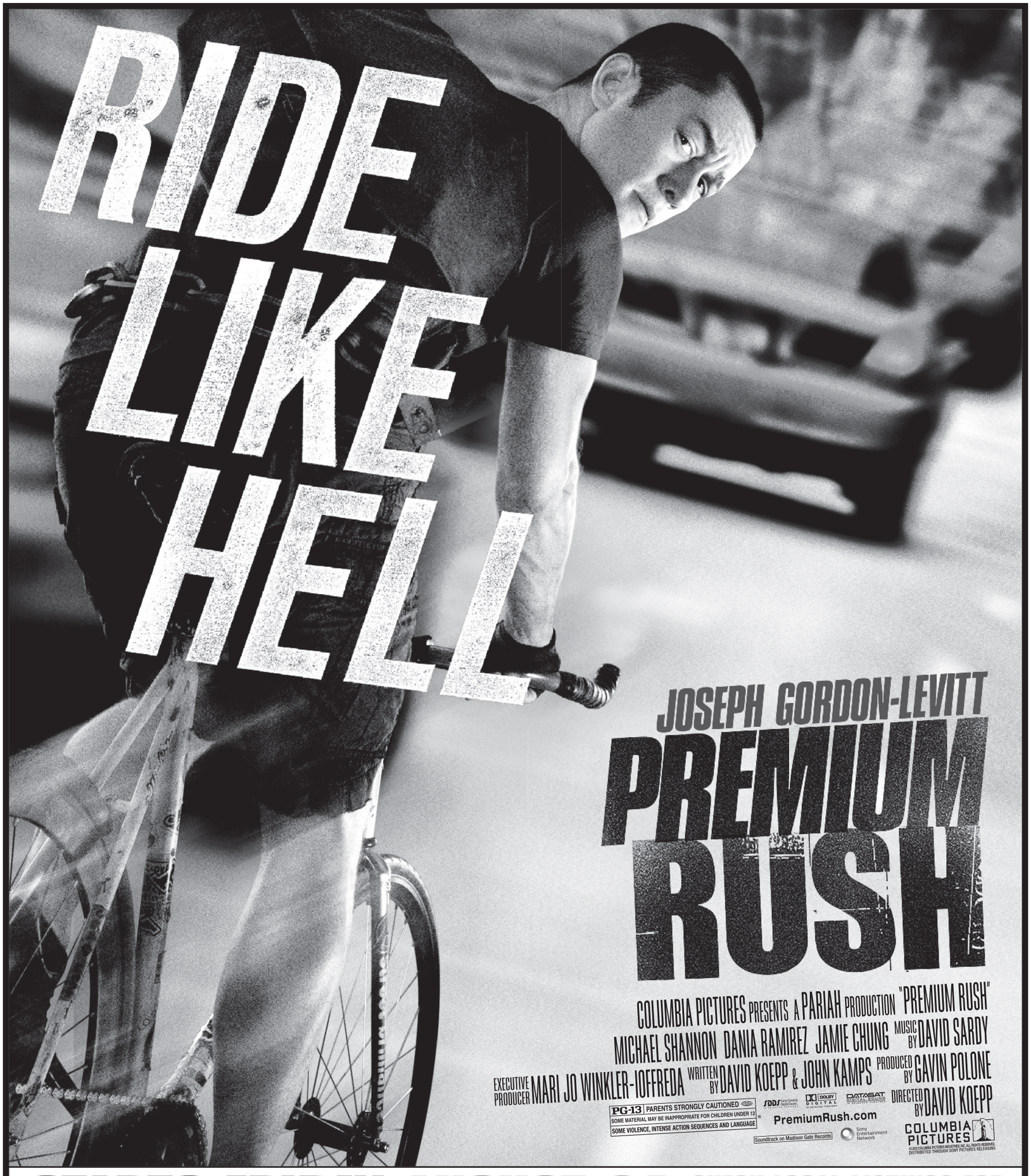
I haven't seen Birbiglia's one-man show, but the excerpt on *This American Life* was recorded in front of a live audience and focused primarily on the episodes of sleepwalking while eliding the drama of Birbiglia's personal life and was played strictly for laughs. *Sleepwalk With Me* the movie is primarily a coming-of-age story, with Birbiglia the director weaving his character's nocturnal dramas into the narrative via dream/nightmare sequences, cutting back and forth between Matt's subconscious and glimpses of Matt in sleepwalking mode as seen by bystanders. These sequences ride a weird tonal line, maybe aiming to split the difference between comedy and terror, but coming off as afraid to really go for either one.

> "If anything, *Sleepwalk* the movie, with its obstinately literal illustrations of Birbiglia's text, makes a persuasive case that the warm-bath introspection of the *This American Life* brand, and Birbiglia's own shaggy-dog storyteller brand, are inherently ill-matched to a medium that's more about showing than telling."

Because this material already exists as a one-man show, a book and the *This American Life* segment, in order for a movie adaptation to feel purposeful, it would have to build on the previous *Sleepwalk* incarnations by doing things that only cinema can do. If anything, *Sleepwalk* the movie, with its obstinately literal illustrations of Birbiglia's text, makes a persuasive case that the warm-bath introspection of the *This American Life* brand and Birbiglia's own shaggy-dog storyteller brand are inherently ill-matched to a medium that's more about showing than telling.

Whedon's video lays out a binary opposition between "little, tiny films" and "corporate spectacle," but as adaptations go, is there really that much of a difference between *Sleepwalk With Me* and something such as *The Avengers*—or *The Bourne Legacy* or *The Amazing Spider-Man* or any of the other movies released this summer that function better as franchise way-stations than as stand-alone entertainments? They're all movies that exist because there's a built-in audience for their existing properties, and big or small, it's okay to be cynical when they fail to justify their existence as anything more than that.

SLEEPWALK WITH ME
was directed by Mike Birbiglia; written by Birbiglia and Ira Glass; and stars Birbiglia, Lauren Ambrose, James Rebhorn, Carol Kane and Cristin Milioti. Not rated.



STARTS FRIDAY, AUGUST 24 CHECK LOCAL LISTINGS FOR THEATERS AND SHOWTIMES

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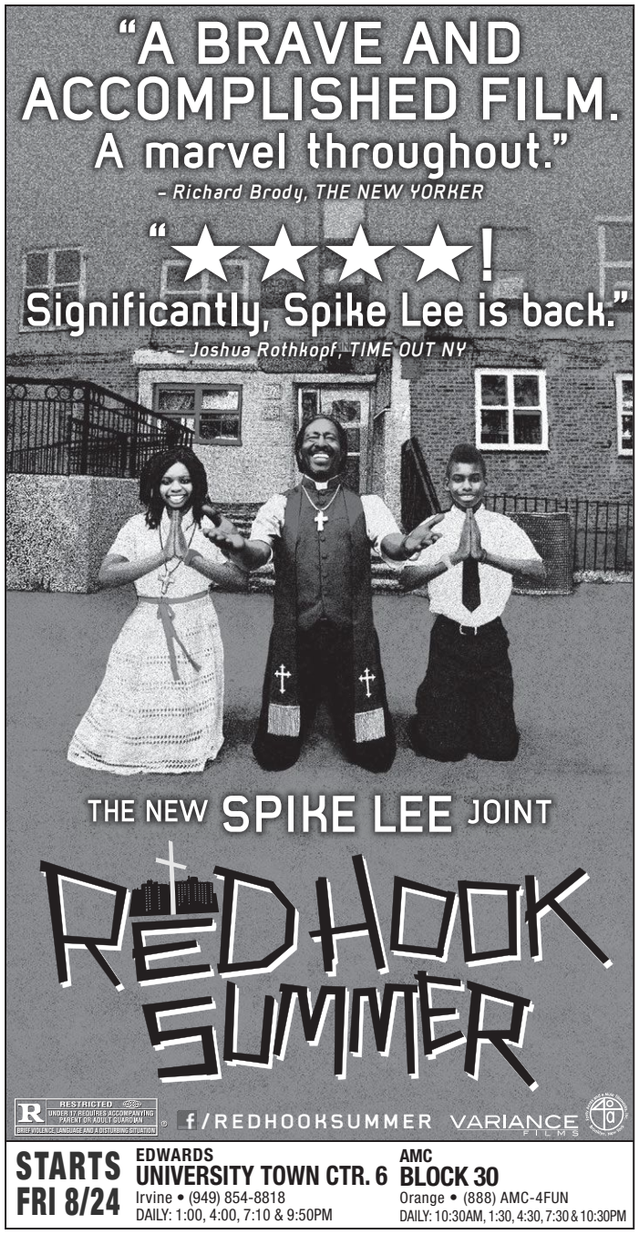
HIT & RUN *Hit & Run*, a new action comedy engineered by faintly Muppety co-director/writer/star Dax Shepard, is as much about running mouths as running motors, and injects estrogen into the few remaining enclaves of American testosterone, muscle cars, and FM cock rock. A lead named "Charles Bronson" and the '67 Lincoln Continental that he takes out of mothballs should establish *Hit & Run*'s cinematic pedigree, but this chase film—shot fast and cheap, using cars from gearhead Shepard's own garage—arranges a head-on collision between 1970s' individualism and 2012 p.c. While on the run from police, Charlie takes a dressing down from his girlfriend (Kristen Bell) for using the word "fag" as a synonym for "lame"; later, when he pulls up in a buggy, he's heckled from offscreen for not "going green," to which he responds, "It's biodiesel, friend." That even the criminal class have gone sensitive and finicky eco-conscious has some potential for comedy, but there's no single detail that might convince a viewer that the characters played by Dax Shepard and Bradley Cooper might ever have been compelled to steal for a living, and this alienates the crime picture from any social context or sense of actual danger, making it essentially a celebrity goof-off. The stunt driving warrants only passing mention, for it's never more than serviceable—one wishes that Shepard and co-director David Palmer had spent a little more time studying Walter Hill and a little less on Hal Needham. **(R)** Nick Pinkerton. *Countywide.*

SLEEPWALK WITH ME See "This American Spin-Off," page 36.

ongoing

THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN Spider-Man's story is some primal-ass teenage wish-fulfillment: nerds beating jocks, astonishing the old people, romancing hot girls, dangling criminals from rooftops, fighting awesome monsters, and for god's sake, people, we're not made of stone, here. *The Amazing Spider-Man*, an inexcusably good reboot-thing from director Marc Webb, celebrates the heartwarming arachno-genetic bar mitzvah in which a boy becomes a spider, and a spider becomes a man. Boy genius Peter Parker, played charmingly by Chia-haired Andrew Garfield, tours the Oscorp lab of Dr. Curt Connors (Rhys Ifans), a kindly, non-mad scientist recklessly tampering with the fundamental forces of nature, as one does. Dr. Connors' facility includes a sealed room full of genetically altered spiders into which Peter sneaks while everyone else is distracted by unlikely Hollywood computer interfaces. Reader, the spider bites him. Credit Sony with making an unconventional choice in Webb, whose great *(500) Days of Summer* was not the obvious debut for the director of a high-profile, big-budget action film. It's all sharp-of-wit and sweetly sentimental for lots of reasons, including Martin Sheen and Sally Field as Peter's Uncle Ben and Aunt May and a peroxide-haired, superbad Emma Stone as a gently ironic Gwen Stacy, Peter Parker's first girlfriend. A bit—how do you say—*boring* in the comics, Gwen is retrofitted here with personality and independence, a damsel in only moderate distress. Denis Leary, as Captain Stacy, father of Gwen, evinces his signature growly sarcasm and hits unexpectedly sweet notes of paternal affection. **(PG-13)** Chris Packham. *Countywide.*



BEASTS OF THE SOUTHERN WILD A zealous gumbo of regionalism, magical realism, post-Katrina allegory, myth, and ecological parable, *Beasts of the Southern Wild*, the southern Louisiana-set debut feature of 29-year-old Benh Zeitlin, rests, often cloyingly, on the tiny shoulders of Quvenzhané Wallis. Co-written by Zeitlin and Lucy Alibar, whose play *Juicy and Delicious* served as the film's starting point, and using a cast of locals, almost all of whom make their acting debut here, *Beasts of the Southern Wild* strains to remind us of Hushpuppy's wisdom and courage beyond her years. She is a motherless child: "She swam away,"explains her father, Wink (Dwight Henry), a chronically ill, frequently drunk man, of Mom's absence. He and Hushpuppy live in separate trailers in a grassy, overgrown expanse in a fictional bayou area called the Bathtub. Stomping around her ramshackle, squalid domain in white plastic rain boots, dirty T-shirt, and orange Underoos, this peewee heroine confidently wields a blowtorch. But in trying through incessant narration to make a six-year-old a prolix sage, Zeitlin can't avoid falling into sticky sentimentality. That's a shame, because Walls has such a commanding presence on-screen—never more so than when the camera observes her up close and in silence, before the music, Hushpuppy's maxim-filled voiceover, and Wink's bellowing kick in. **(PG-13)** Melissa Anderson. *Countywide.*

THE BOURNE LEGACY The *Bourne* films have more than just overstayed their welcome and outlasted the Ludlum books—they've been Van Halenized, with an abrupt change of front man and a resulting dip in personality. The series up to now has survived via Matt Damon's beady gaze, making decisions about where the story goes, even as director Paul Greengrass' jittery action fuzz did its best to render the set pieces of the past two entries almost unwatchable. Now, we have Jeremy Renner as another Treadstone mega man (there were nine, apparently), and though he is a likable enough pug-nosed action figure, the Damonlessness is sorely felt. Working in the trenches so he can eventually make himself another *Michael Clayton*, director Tony Gilroy keeps things brisk and relatively smart, but he can't be surprised if we find the rooftop-'n'-motorcycle chase through Manila a little rote by now, however white-knuckly and free of Greengrass camera palsy. The late-in-the-game introduction of a supervillain—a Bourne 2.0 from a "beta program" flown in from Bangkok in white skinny jeans—feels like outright pandering. But hell, it's the fourth film, and that's what happens when Hollywood hyperextends a simple paradigm beyond even the patience of the last cast and crew. **(PG-13)** Michael Atkinson. *Countywide.*

BRAVE "I'd rather die than be like you," the barely adolescent heroine of Pixar's 13th feature roars to her mother, perhaps the most radical line ever uttered in a Disney production—and one that highlights just how different *Brave*'s heroine's predicament is from those of her recent screen sistren. Where fellow bow-and-arrow expert Katniss Everdeen from *The Hunger Games* and the titular princess of *Snow White and the Huntsman* are each one point in love triangles, Merida, resolutely asexual, is nonetheless entangled in the most complicated love- and hate-filled dyad of all: that between a teenage daughter and her mother. With her flame-colored ringlets, Merida looks like a wee Rebekah Brooks, maybe a pint-size Florence Welch, but despite these resemblances, she remains an original: B*rave*, set in the Scottish Highlands in the 10th century, is the animation studio's first film with a female protagonist, a defiant lass who acts as a much-welcome corrective to retrograde Disney heroines of the past and the company's unstoppable pink-princess merchandising. Of course, Merida's insurrectionary spirit can last only so long in a House of Mouse vehicle; the majority of *Brave*'s running time after her uprising is devoted to restoring the sanctity of the nuclear family after her wish to be free from tradition and arranged marriages goes wrong. Still, despite some distracting, convoluted plot points—there's too much tomfoolery among the King, the lords from the other clans, and their scions, perhaps to broaden the film's appeal to boys—*Brave* is, well, brave. **(PG)** Melissa Anderson. *Countywide.*

THE CAMPAIGN *The Campaign* begins with an on-screen quote attributed to Ross Perot: "War has rules. Mud-wrestling has rules. Politics has no rules." The reference is a fitting start to this amusing but toothless R-rated comedy from Jay Roach, the founding director of the *Austin Powers* and *Meet the Parents* franchises, who most recently signed his name to the Sarah Palin-humanizing HBO movie, *Game Change*. Like past-his-peak Perot, *The Campaign* is basically a footnote, a goof on our broken political system that's good for a certain novelty, but as a challenge to the dominant order, it's impotent. Will Ferrell stars as Cam Brady, a Republican North Carolina congressman who suggests a hybrid of Ferrell's George W. Bush caricature and Bill Clinton's most spoofable horn-dog extremes, who is running against political novice Marty Huggins (Zach Galifianakis). The core of *The Campaign*'s comedy consists of the Brady and Huggins campaigns setting increasingly absurd traps for the other to fall in, with each ensuing incident breathlessly reported by media that stubbornly refuse to traffic in logic or offer context. By design, *The Campaign* is less a satire than a utopian fantasy. F-bombs and bestiality jokes aside, it's basically a small-town fable in which just-folk human beings are temporarily corrupted by opportunistic evil outsiders, a threat that is ultimately eradicated in what amounts to a fairy-tale snap of the finger. **(R)** Karina Longworth. *Countywide.*

THE DARK KNIGHT RISES *The Dark Knight Rises* is a shallow repository of ideas, but as a work of sheer sensation, it has something to recommend. Director Christopher Nolan has continued his experimentation with the vast IMAX format, and the sheer mass of what he has constructed inspires a dull awe—it is impossible not to be cowed by a film that's five stories tall, as a stampeding Hans Zimmer–led orchestra tramples you. If *The Dark Knight* openly invited reading as the War on Terror Batman, then *The Dark Knight Rises* is the Occupy Wall Street installment. "You think all this can last?" down-and-out, survivor cat burglar Selina (Anne Hathaway) says upon meeting Bruce Wayne (Christian Bale) at a masquerade ball. "There's a storm coming." That storm breaks in the form of the living incarnation of Have-Not rancor, Bane, a villain whose visage will remind many of the unmasked Darth Vader, though his purr is closer to Vincent Price talking through a window fan. As throughout the Batman films, Nolan is at his best symphonizing second-unit footage, illustrating how the shock waves of an assault resound across the infrastructure of an entire city, a coordinated assault on Gotham's pressure points being a particular high point here. As always, all of the on-the-nose speechifying keeps the movies running long, while the drum-tight rule of schematic relevance shuts out anything resembling wit, spontaneity, and recognizable human conduct. The history of Batman's burden is, however, increasingly cumbersome, and it's Mr. Bane who finally makes the pertinent point: "Gotham is beyond saving and must be allowed to die." **(PG-13)** Nick Pinkerton. *Countywide.*

THE EXPENDABLES 2 As befits a throwback to the righteous-kill, Reagan-era action movie, *The Expendables 2* begins with most of the male population of a Third World nation being evaporated into red dew by superior firepower. So resumes the machine-gun etiquette and repartee—"Oh, shit," "Arggghhh," "Yeahhh," "Whoo-rah"—of the titular soldiers of fortune, returning from Sylvester Stallone's 2010 nostalgia victory lap. This time around, the Expendables (Stallone, Jason Statham, and assorted beef) cinch on their trusses to chase a Great Whatsit across Cold War–istan, and race against a dastardly, curiously made-up Jean-Claude Van Damme, who radiates an amusing aristocratic disdain. Director Simon West has previously shown a knack for brazenly overinflating action clichés until they giddily pop—notably in 1997 classic-of-a-sort *Con Air*—and his *Expendables 2* does admittedly discover some ingenious new methods for disassembling the human form. But any glee is offset by the film's weakness for mechanical self-reference, encompassing joyless one-liner nods to the assembled actors' filmographies and a knowing attitude toward the film's Hall of Fame, cavalcade-of-cameos nature—Chuck Norris and a windblown and slightly spooked Arnold Schwarzenegger pass through—making a sour joke of flaunting its outright cash-in cynicism (actual exchange: "Thanks for stopping by." "My pleasure"). Has the parallel between the actor and the mercenary's trade ever been so overt? **(R)** Nick Pinkerton. *Countywide.*

HOPE SPRINGS Although the tone of Steve Carell's couples-counseling character in *Hope Springs* is consis-

tently placid and even-handed, it's also tellingly vague. *Hope Springs* might appear more contemplative than your average studio-produced rom-com, but that's only because it's atypically concerned with an older couple's marriage problems. Dr. Feld's (Carell) soothing advice sounds nice, but it's ultimately insubstantial. Meryl Streep and Tommy Lee Jones play Kay and Arnold, a couple with marriage problems that only Kay is willing to acknowledge. In theory, Arnold and Kay's problems are universal. Their relationship has lost its intimacy, thanks in no small part to the fact that they haven't had sex in five years. But more often than not, screenwriter Vanessa Taylor and director David Frankel (*The Devil Wears Prada*) unfairly use Dr. Feld to preach tolerance to Arnold while otherwise pushing the audience to blame him for the couple's problems. Admittedly, you can't fully sympathize with either Kay or Arnold: Kay, in spite of her persistent best efforts, is always on the verge of tears, and Arnold is always bitching and grousing. Jones and Streep give likable enough performances as a caricatures of a humane monster and a human victim. But their characters never become more than that. And for a rom-com that's trying to impress viewers with its progressive, sensitive sexual politics, that's pretty deadly. **(PG-13)** Simon Abrams. *Countywide.*

THE INTOUCHABLES If you are under the impression that a far more discerning and sophisticated moviegoing public still exists somewhere on the other side of the Atlantic, I would direct you toward *The Intouchables*, an event-size hit in its native France, and a bit of feel-good social-drama pandering that makes *The Blind Side* seem positively Renoir-esque in its delicate touch. A "Based on a True Story" announcement is invariably a warning that you're about to watch a movie in which nothing resembling human behavior is seen. *The Intouchables* details the unlikely friendship between multimillionaire quadriplegic Philippe (François Cluzet) and his live-in caretaker, Driss (Omar Sy), a Senegalese-born son of the banlieue. Moving into Philippe's gilded Parisian palace, Driss blows the dust off the place, prescribing his employer hash for his phantom pains, funking up a tuxedoed white folks' party, and dealing tough advice to Philippe's daughter's #firstworldproblems. With his ghetto striver's preference for the shiny and new, Driss also liberates Philippe from the straightjacket of musty high culture connoisseurship, which allows for tedious, ignorance-affirming cracks at modern painting and opera. The leads' charisma goes some small way towards softening the script's cudgeling sentimentality, but the overall effect is a drubbing all the same. **(R)** Nick Pinkerton. *Countywide.*

KILLER JOE At one point in *Killer Joe*, based on Tracy Letts' play, a hideously funny tabloid noir set on the outskirts of Dallas County, Chris Smith (Emile Hirsch) is let into the family double-wide by a relation whose face has just been pummeled into a Rorschach blot of dried gore. He doesn't stop to ask what happened—such is the milieu of casual violence in which the film takes place, where it's easy to slip imperceptibly into perdition. In to some bad men for money, Chris enlists his father, Ansel (Thomas Haden Church), in a plan: Kill Momma and collect on the life insurance policy she has made over to teenage daughter, Dottie (Juno Temple, a peroxided sprite who's more than a little touched). They enlist the services of "Killer Joe" Cooper (Matthew McConaughey), a West Dallas detective who moonlights as a hired killer. The Smiths don't have money for a down payment, but they have something more precious: Dottie is a virgin. No longer content to gigolo along on his looks, McConaughey again shows new depths in an auteur's film: "His eyes hurt," says Dottie of Joe, and indeed they do, while the click of Joe's Zippo sounds like an unsheathed dagger. Friedkin has always been an envelope-pusher, most famously with *The Exorcist*, and *Killer Joe* contains one particular scene that is as difficult as any I've seen. It is not, however, egregious—in fact, it synthesizes Joe's double life as cop and killer, revolving around the horrible discord that occurs when interrogation-room psychological warfare is unleashed in a domestic setting. **(NC-17)** Nick Pinkerton. *Edwards University Town Center 6, Irvine.*

THE ODD LIFE OF TIMOTHY GREEN "Lots of people hate anything that's different," says Cindy Green (Jennifer Garner) to her Pinterest/vision-board child Timothy (CJ Adams) while trying to explain why he must cover up the leaves that sprout on his legs. That nutshelled life lesson is one of the pegs upon which this live-action fertility fairy tale hangs. It's also one of the few of its kitchen-sink issues and themes around family (infertility, sibling rivalry, emotionally distant fathers/grandfathers, the impact of death on families, transnational adoption) that is actually developed or given space for contemplation. After Cindy (Jennifer Garner) and her husband, Jim (Joel Edgerton), learn that they cannot have a baby of their own, an artfully mud-speckled magic boy Timothy crawls from their garden and—yep—into their hearts. Garner applies her workmanlike charm to Cindy (her dimples should have their own agent) and has good chemistry with Edgerton, who is scruffily appealing. The supporting cast, meanwhile, is better than the material demands, but there's something cynically smart in the way the movie peddles catharsis without ever facing trauma. **(PG)** Ernest Hardy. *Countywide.*

PARANORMAN Another handsome handcrafted charmer from Laika, the stop-motion shop that gave us *Coraline*, makes up for lacking its predecessor's delicacy by also lacking its dispassion. In scenic Blithe Hollow, whose main industry is the window-dressing of its own witch-hunt history, and whose founding fathers return one night as marauding zombies, a lonely little dead-people seer finds his calling at last. Customarily shunned and necessarily groupthink-resistant, young Norman, voiced by Kodi Smit-McPhee, stands poised to transpose middle school estrangement into redemptive proto-adult empathy. This occurs by way of agreeably domesticated grind house tropes, tricked out with snazzy F/X. At Comic-Con, debut writer and co-director Chris Butler called it "John Carpenter meets John Hughes," and that does just about sum *ParaNorman* up, though the actual math still feels a little fuzzy. Butler and co-director Sam Fell, of *Flushed Away*, have more vernacular command than tonal harmony; if they achieve roughly equal parts lulz and lulls, at least it's through a steady pressure of avidity. Better still, animation affords a supporting cast playing contentedly against type: Anna Kendrick as a vain ditz, Christopher Mintz-Plasse as a dopey bully, and Casey Affleck as a meathead jock. **(PG)** Jonathan Kiefer. *Countywide.*

THE QUEEN OF VERSAILLES Vividly bringing to life the question of whether self-denial is a social responsibility that Don DeLillo poses in *Cosmopolis*, Lauren Greenfield's new documentary tracks the post-crash lifestyle of rich so nouveau it doesn't realize its appetites strike others as crude. The titular royal is Jackie Siegel, a fortyish IBM engineer turned model turned trophy wife to seventyish time-share mogul David Siegel. Audiences laugh at the Siegel family's tackiness—their life-size oil paintings of themselves, the pet poop drying on what seems like every carpet, the limo Jackie takes to McDonald's. Schadenfreude is fair play, I guess, but bad taste and questionable hygiene are not crimes—or really, even all that LOL-worthy. After the 2008 market collapse, the Siegels have to halt construction on their new "house," a complex the size of Fantasyland in the form of a replica of Versailles. "The banks made us do it," Jackie claims, after Westgate—Siegel's time-share company—lays off 6,000 workers. "I thought that rescue money was supposed to be passed on to the common people," she says of the bailout. "Or you know, us." Fueling Versailles is a nagging, unresolved tension between what seems like the filmmaker's sympathy for the libertarian boldness of David's unwillingness to compromise—in the land of the free (market), who has the right to police anyone else's asset management or consumption?—and the damning evidence Greenfield presents of the ugly gluttony of that spending in practice. **(PG)** Karina Longworth. *Edwards Westpark 8, Irvine.*

SPARKLE Post-blaxploitation and pre-Dreamgirls, the original, funky, low-budget *Sparkle* from 1976 set its girl-group rise and fall in Harlem in 1958. Salim Akil's remake, scripted by his wife, Mara Brock Akil (creator of the late, great *Girlfriends* and *The Game*), moves the action to Detroit, 1968. With this relo, the production design has been expanded considerably, as has the plot and dialogue; the forebear's underwritten melodrama has been supplanted by Tyler Perry–like soap operatics and much jawing about the Lord, riots in the Motor City, marriage proposals, and maternal heartbreak and disapproval. *Sparkle* 2.0 wisely retains most of the '76 version's Curtis Mayfield–composed songs, and the new numbers by R. Kelly fit nicely with those outstanding tracks. But where the original singing threesome—siblings who went onstage as "Sister and the Sisters"—generated intense heat from the fiery, foxy Lonette McKee, the redo suffers from the weak screen presences of Carmen Ejogo as the troupe's lead singer, who gets hooked on dope and bad love, and *American Idol* winner Jordin Sparks in the title role (originated by Irene Cara), who goes solo after Sister self-destructs. But one casting choice was perfect: Immediately after the Akils' *Sparkle* becomes most ridiculous, the film cuts to Whitney Houston, as the trio's stern, Bible-brandishing mother, singing "His Eye Is on the Sparrow." The moment is not as sublime as Mahalia Jackson's "Trouble of the World"in Douglas Sirk's *Imitation of Life,* but it's close enough. **(Not Rated)** Melissa Anderson. *Countywide.*

TED Fans of Seth MacFarlane's Fox mainstay *Family Guy* who wish he would run afoul of FCC regulations every week might be pleased with *Ted*, the story of a 35-year-old man and his foul-talking teddy bear. Plushies, too, might be turned on by the pot-smoking, whore-banging CGI toy ursus of the title, voiced by MacFarlane, making his feature-directing debut, which he co-scripted with *Family Guy* writers Alec Sulkin and Wellesley Wild. Other specialized demographics—namely, anyone over 15 who can't claim membership in either of the above groups—might sit in the theater in stony silence. *Ted*'s overextended, desultory 104 minutes—which include a kidnapping, a car chase, a set piece propelled by Tiffany's "I Think We're Alone Now" video, and a Norah Jones concert—also operate on the premise that audiences can't resist having their baser instincts appealed to over and over again, especially when the filthy talk, gay panic, and racist jokes pour forth from as dissonant a figure as a stuffed animal. But does the bear really look that dissimilar to—or function that much differently from—Seth Rogen, Jonah Hill, Jason Segel, or any other round-bellied bad influence from movies made under the sign of Apatow during the past five years? Like its buddy-movie predecessors, *Ted* has a soft, squishy ending, one meant to vindicate the girlfriend (Mila Kunis) who insists John grow up, even if the film has so little use for her—or any female who doesn't want to spread her legs for Ted. **(R)** Melissa Anderson. *Countywide.*

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WHERE ARE STABLER AND BENSON WHEN YOU NEED THEM?

Don't Hate the Messenger

An hour of ugly in *Hate* makes for an evening of empty by the end

BY STACY DAVIES

The time is always right, unfortunately, for a play, television show or film about hate crimes in America—this year alone, we've had more tragedies and exposition on the issue than any one person can take. It's so incredibly troubling, in fact, that trying to wrap our heads around motive often seems futile, and every answer we come up with regarding why someone kills with no provocation and only because of race, gender or sexuality is always the same: some combination of ignorance, learned behavior, poverty and mental illness.

That also means that if one chooses to tackle the subject of violent acts of hate, the information offered better be new or insightful, something that makes us look at the issue from another angle, if only a slight one, that we've not considered before. In that regard, *OC Weekly* critic Joel Beers' new play about hate crime, directed by Barney Evans at STAGEStheatre, doesn't deliver.

The hour-long production centers on the interrogation of two men, a malicious but intelligent, Fullerton-based, white-power leader named Carpenter (Sean Hesketh) and his thuggish, heavy metal-loving, uneducated disciple Jackson (Steven Sullivan). They're accused of bombing a local mosque, an act that inadvertently leaves a half-dozen schoolchildren burned almost to death. On the good guys' team are Detective Kerrigan (Adam Poynter) and Officer Burroughs (Aaron Campbell), led by Homeland Security investigator Rivera (Laura Harper), but the interrogation, per se, is much less about gathering evidence to pin to the racist punks than to find out why they think the way they do, turning the room into a psychotherapist's session and forcing a plotline that instantly feels false given the circumstances and surroundings.

Perhaps this mismatch fed into the directing, which often seems confused and without purpose. Several times, for example, Officer Burroughs leaves his post and exits the stage while Rivera is interrogating the suspects. It's a highly unusual action, so, we assume, he must be a secret cohort of the criminals and is setting Rivera up. If that's the case, we're never let in on the conspiracy, and his random entering and exiting ends up being a "cheat" so Rivera can, by happenstance, be attacked. Likewise, Evans moves the characters around in ways that call attention to the placement when it shouldn't—as when Rivera is ruminating on hate while staring into the two-way mirror. To us, it looks as though she's staring out a window (there is a large frame suspended in the middle of the stage, separating us from those inside the room), but for the Rivera *character*, her face is about 2 inches from a mirror, and she's basically looking up her own nose.

Rivera's troubles run much deeper, however. Like many female characters placed in positions of power within fiction, the Latina inspector falls victim to the limitations often shackled onto her sex. Ineffective and emotional, she is so inept in her attempts to break the racists' front that I'm surprised neither supremacist accused her of attaining her powerful position through affirmative action alone—because it's an argument they might have won. Unlike some of her well-known British female detective and government-agent peers generated from stories across the pond, this woman is not tough, intimidating or all that smart, and her gender appears to be the source of her problem. This means we're never on her side, suspecting from the get-go that she will fail to nail the dirtbags.

Hindering the story further is an abundance of overacting—posturing, slamming fists on tables in endless emphasis, and a horde of unnervingly odd facial contortions meant to convey internal emotions were sad, unnecessary distractions from dialogue that actually did have something to say. And while I'd heard all of the messages within the play before, I offer the caveat that many people have not.

For those who are blissfully unaware of their racist tendencies (calling all brown-skinned people Mexicans, for example, and not understanding why that might be insulting), or for the young person who isn't immersed in the myriad news reports on race and hate crimes, this play is just the thing to rattle them—especially if they take to heart Beers' jab that organized, underground Aryans live in Fullerton, too. For the educated audience member, however, the progressive lefties who notice every racial, gender or sexual verbal misstep, the work is unaffecting, if still legitimate.

The result is an hour of ugly—which is what Beers intended, of course—but there's little to take home if you're already keenly aware of the social malignancies that plague our nation and often ruminate on their causes, not just their effects. That entails a lot of *additional* thinking on remedies, and that's a subject I'd like to spend an hour seeing played out onstage.

HATE
at STAGEStheatre, 400 E. Commonwealth Ave., Fullerton, (714)-525-4484; www.stagesoc.org. Sat.-Sun., 5 p.m. Through Sept. 15. $16-$18.

TRENDZILLA
» MICHELLE WOO

OC's Best Online Boutiques

Let's be glad I don't have my credit-card number memorized. There's a plethora of shopping sites loaded with *über*-chic, budget-minded clothes and accessories, and some of my all-time favorites are based right here in OC. Bookmark these URLs, and get ready to squeal, swoon and reach for your wallet. Fair warning: You may just swear off mall parking lots and awful dressing-room lighting for good.

RUCHE
Whenever someone compliments me on an outfit and asks me where I got it, there's a pretty good chance the answer is Ruche. Founded in 2008 by husband-and-wife team Mai and Josh Olivo, the Fullerton-based boutique is constantly updated with adorable, affordable, vintage-inspired items: dresses, tops, shoes, bags, jewelry, home goods, stationery, even a bridal collection. What makes the site stand out is how interactive the team is with its fans—or "Ruchettes," as they're called. A blog features giveaways, video contests and a *Breakfast at Ruche* live-streamed web show. One of the latest (and *cuuuutest*) Ruche additions: a baby section. "We like to think of ourselves as one big family," Mai says of the crew. "Josh and I recently announced our first child over the warehouse intercom." *www.shopruche.com.*

THREADSENCE
Threadsence is Ruche's wild little sister. Its shoppers are fun, edgy and can often be found Instagramming themselves at house parties. Launched in 2010 by the Olivos and their friend, UC Irvine grad Vu Bui, the site has exploded into a hub for lovers of indie music, art and fashion. Badass items include tops with spiked sleeves, asymmetrical skirts, ombre denim shorts, floral combat boots and skull-decked clutches. The site includes a cool section called Hot Minute that features Q&As with designers and bloggers on the rise. There are also playlists, recipes and street-style snaps—get ready to waste away the day. *www.threadsence.com.*

80'S PURPLE
This Huntington Beach-based online boutique has been outfitting young, free-spirited guys and gals since 2004. Founder and buyer Belle Nguyen packs the shop with rad brands such as Obey, Wildfox Couture, Stussy and OC's supplier of stylish bow ties, Cotton Treats. Some of the most coveted pieces, however, come from the company's own collection, Purple Label. (Check out the custom-dyed, studded Levi's cut-offs—must have!) The site is also a great destination for swimwear and eyewear, carrying such designer brands as Tom Ford, vintage styles and a super-affordable house line. *www.80spurple.com.*

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ZONE PAGES

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Lighthearted Headbangers

Cannibal Corpse are only joking about frantically disemboweling you. Right?

BY NED RAGGETT

Take a second to visualize George Fisher of Cannibal Corpse. His thick-soled jack boots support a beefy, taller-than-6-foot frame draped in black, a sweat-stained T-shirt sporting a bloody, grotesque band logo. His face, sprouted from mountain-range shoulders and a tree-trunk neck, is painted with a furrowing grimace half-covered by a cascade of back-length brown hair perfect for headbanging. One good stare from him prompts a sudden urge to urinate. They call him the Corpsegrinder.

But get him on the phone to talk about his band's headlining turn on the Summer Slaughter tour, and it turns out when he's not gnashing his teeth or bending his voice to unholy octaves, he sounds kinda, well, sweet. Aside from talking about the long-worshipped death-metal band of which he has been the lead singer since the early '90s, there are mentions of dealing with the summer heat and goofing off with his tourmates, all sounding pretty relaxed. Not something one might expect from the hair-swinging king of a tour sporting some of the most savage-sounding bands in the business.

Names such as Goatwhore, Exhumed and Cerebral Bore City describe the amalgam of destructive death-metal practitioners from Southern California to Scotland. But those accustomed to festivals that revel in aural brutality might be a bit surprised by Fisher's calmer offstage side when it comes to the set-time scheduling.

"We're playing about five fewer songs than we normally would," Fisher says, the demonic growl usually heard over the mic exchanged for a casually chatty, thoughtful demeanor. "We're playing 15 songs during our set; we normally play around 20 when we headline our own tour. We have to keep it a certain length with such a tight schedule; we've got 10 bands playing all day long. People have to get home and get up for their jobs!"

ALEX MORGAN

CANNIBAL CORPSE ARE ALL SMILES, AS USUAL

Since forming in 1988, Cannibal Corpse still only have one job: to scare the shit out of you. The Grand Guignol imagery of the band's lyrics and artwork started with their memorably grotesque album cover for *Eaten Back to Life*, a gut-splattering zombie delight. They initially emerged in a wave of bands inspired by '80s thrash and death metal demigods such as Slayer and Deicide. Album titles such as *Tomb of the Mutilated* and *Torture*, their newest release, only scratch at the surface of their extensive back catalog. Each record during their nearly 25-year career further cultivates a signature gory sound and persona. Anyone still perturbed at all the imagery, though, should be aware that songs such as "Frantic Disembowelment" aren't representative of their hobbies away from the band.

"I don't want people watching to think, 'Man, that dude could kill me if he met me,'" Fisher says. "I want to them to understand that when we're playing, we're in a different zone. It takes a lot of time to compose our music and hone it to where it's something we could put on the record. But we're not just walking around with scowls on our faces all day long."

When it comes to explaining how the band have stayed together for so long without killing one another, Fisher says even after all these years of touring, it's no easy task.

"We're all hanging out on the bus, but we all also know how to have our own space, too, and we understand when somebody's grouchy for a certain reason," Fisher says. "When I wake up, I'm grouchy—I'm all, 'Rrrrr, I don't want to talk to nobody.' Those guys who wake up and are all, 'Hey, how you doing?' It kills me; I'm never one of those guys."

Of course, no band can survive unless they lighten up a little. Fisher says ball-busting and practical jokes between band members is their main pastime on the road. And no matter how evil it sounds, it still takes plenty of heart to make a death-metal career last as long as they have.

"We all have our own different interests outside [the band], but we all do have common bonds that we share," Fisher says. "We love this music, we love playing it, we like being out here and playing shows for people, and we're happy people still want to come see us."

CANNIBAL CORPSE
perform at the Summer Slaughter Tour with Between the Buried and Me, the Faceless, Periphery, Veil of Maya, Job for a Cowboy, Goatwhore, Exhumed, Cerebral Bore City, and more at City National Grove of Anaheim, 2200 E. Katella Ave., Anaheim; www.thegroveofanaheim.com. Aug. 25, 1 p.m. $32.50. All ages.

AskExene
» EXENE CERVENKA

Woman Seeking Manimal

DEAR EXENE: I was on a date with a guy recently, and something happened that forced me to question my shallowness when it comes to dating. We'd just left a restaurant in downtown Fullerton on a Saturday night, right as the whole place starts to turn into a drunk fest around all the bars. On our way out, my date—a guy I met through an online-dating site—accidentally bumped another guy on the shoulder. The other guy, who was a bit taller and burlier, made a big deal out of it by picking a fight with my date. As he apologized and walked away, the guy followed us down the street and threatened to kick my date's ass if he didn't turn around and face him. He sounded pretty belligerent. My date, however, started forcing me to walk faster to the point where we were almost running back to the car. "Don't look at him," he said. Eventually, the guy gave up and just yelled out, "Pussy!" so everyone around us in the parking lot could hear. My date just kept walking with me and didn't say anything back.

Afterward, I couldn't help feeling a little turned off by him and how he handled it, and I've been making up reasons to dodge him ever since, partly because I'm embarrassed at myself for feeling this way, but also because, frankly, whatever attraction I had for him kind of just went out the window because of the incident. Trust me: I know how wrong that sounds. Later on that night, I could've invited him to spend the night, but I didn't. As a woman, I'm sure it's encoded in my DNA that a man is supposed to protect me, which my date was obviously trying to do—but is it totally wrong for me to have judged this guy so harshly as a potential partner?

Love, Cheyenne

DEAR CHEYENNE: Who needs DNA when there's so much brainwashing? Your guy could have done a lot of things. He could have stalked off to his truck and crashed it into the crowd, hoping to kill the bigger guy. Or he could've gotten in a big, bloody, senseless fight, resulting in arrest and jail, or yelled back and been shot or stabbed, etc.

Males are conditioned to be violent. And these days, there's lots of random violence going on. Walking away, however emasculating it appeared to you, was the smart, strong, infinitely more evolved choice. He *was* protecting you by walking away, which makes him stronger than the asshole guy. It's not shallowness; it's a grand misconception. So what if your date had fired back at the asshole guy and made him back down? Then he would be a potential partner, and you would have rewarded him with sex? Why do you want to be the helpless princess in a pornographic fairy tale?

My advice to you:

You are looking for strength. Find it in yourself.

Love, Exene

Exene Cervenka is a writer, visual artist and punk rock pioneer. The OC transplant is the lead singer for X, the Knitters and Original Sinners. If you want to ask the legendary vocalist for advice—on your love life, politics, your musical career—send an email to askexene@ocweekly.com.

Bluesman In the Middle

By playing with old legends and inspiring future ones, Junior Watson has become one himself

BY NATE JACKSON

THE BALD AND THE BEAUTIFUL

One of the West Coast's most influential guitarists, OC's senior sage Junior Watson's dexterous delivery of slick, cerebral blues has always set him apart, even as a sideman playing for icons such as George Smith and Jimmy Rogers. His timeless, hybrid style—showcased at the Great Park as part of the Flight and Sounds Summer Festival—makes him an intermediary between modern-day hotshots and long-dead legends.

Yet the weight of that role doesn't occur to him often, especially not when he's hungry. Between chomps of a toasted, glistening medianoche—a Cuban sandwich of ham and roasted pork—at a back table at Felix Continental Cafe in Old Town Orange, he explains why being a good student of the blues means ignoring the rules of the old masters.

"My style is taking a lot of stuff that I learned and going, 'I'm not doing that,'" says the bald Watson through the thick wool of his salted, brown goatee. He grins slyly. "I see how they did that, and this is what I'm gonna do instead. That way, I came up with my own thing. And people don't know where you get it." To date, you can find the expressive chops of the 62-year-old virtuoso on more than 230 recordings including *Boogie'n With George*, one of the last records of the late, legendary George "Harmonica" Smith.

Before jamming with giants, Watson's first exposure to the Bay Area music scene was going to the Fillmore to see such blue-eyed blues artists as Peter Green (Fleetwood Mack founder and original guitarist) in the '70s, back when hippies were hired off the street to work the venue's stage lights for nothing more than $1, a show poster or a hit of acid. In 1971, he lived in the storied Bay Area blues sanctuary the "10101 house," just west of San Jose. He remembers it being home to an immense blues-record collection numbering in the thousands. While gazing through it, Watson says, he was inspired to become an authentic bluesman.

"I'd never seen so many records of any genre, period," Watson says. "Little Walter, Muddy Waters, all the real stuff."

Watson's first career break came as a guitarist in the Gary Smith Blues Band in the mid-'70s, backing up every major artist who came through the Bay, including Big Mama Thornton and Charlie Musselwhite. He moved on to forge a distinct musical path as a founder of the clean-cut, sharp-suited troupe the Mighty Flyers in 1977, with harmonica-blowing showman Rod Piazza. He bowed out in 1988 to tour with LA blues heroes Canned Heat (of "Going Up the Country" fame), which lasted for 10 years.

But the longtime Stanton resident jumped tracks years ago to become a solo artist. The latest offering of his nimble, cartoonish style echoes on *Jumpin' Wit Junior*, recorded on reel-to-reel tape and released last May. While recording, Watson shunned modern amenities such as Pro-Tools; not even a mixing board was allowed in the studio. Instead, he'd adjust the tone on his amps live during the recording sessions, just as his blues forefathers did.

But even for someone who claims the quality of musicianship began declining in 1940, he's still interested in the innovation and the persistence of younger acts such as the Derek Trucks, the Black Keys and Gary Clark Jr., whose new-school bravado continue the evolution of the blues. Though his cult status forces him to accept the gradual slowing down that accompanies seniority, he still has eyes on what future players will bring to his art form.

"Ya know, 'cause an old fart like me ain't gonna do nothin," Watson says. "We might influence some kids or something, but we ain't gonna make no major record. It's gotta be the next generation making the record."

NJACKSON@OCWEEKLY.COM

JUNIOR WATSON
performs at the Flights and Sounds Festival: Jim Washburn's Guitar Picks with the John Jorgensen Quintet and Mark Turnbull at Palm Court Arts Complex, the Orange County Great Park, 6990 Marine Way, Irvine, (866) 829-3829; www.ocgp.org. Thurs., Aug. 23, 8:15 p.m. Free; parking, $10. All ages.

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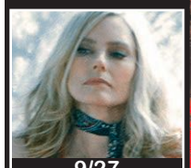
8/26 ERIC JOHNSON

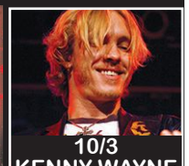
9/19 ERIC LINDELL


9/27 AIMEE MANN

9/30 OZOMATLI

9/28 THE ENGLISH BEAT

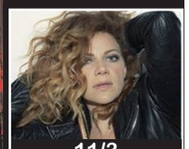
8/23 MICHAEL FRANKS
8/24 LED ZEPAGAIN
8/25 MARC SEAL
8/26 ERIC JOHNSON
8/29 MIDNITE
8/30 HAPA
8/31 MICHAEL AND THE LONESOME PLAYBOYS
9/1 STEVE TYRELL
9/2 PATO BANTON
9/6 NEKTAR
9/7 JOHN HIATT & THE COMBO
9/8 THE MOTHER HIPS
9/14 COCO MONTOYA
9/15 OC BANDSTAND (11AM-3PM)
9/15 THE ULTIMATE STONES
9/19 ERIC LINDELL
9/20 TAB BENOIT
9/21 DAVE ALVIN AND THE GUILTY ONES
9/22 ORANGE COUNTY'S FUNNIEST HOUSEWIVES
9/23 PONCHO SANCHEZ
9/27 AIMEE MANN
9/28 THE ENGLISH BEAT
9/29 JIMMIE VAUGHAN
9/30 OZOKIDZ (DOORS 1:30P/SHOW 3P)
9/30 OZOMATLI
10/3 KENNY WAYNE SHEPHERD
10/5 LITA FORD
10/6 DEBBIE REYNOLDS
10/11 STEVE KIMOCK with BERNIE WORRELL, WALLY INGRAM, and ANDY HESS
10/12 SAVOY BROWN
10/13 SONNY LANDRETH
10/14 JOHN SEBASTIAN & JIMMY VIVINO (ACOUSTIC)
10/18 TAJ MAHAL
10/19 LEON RUSSELL
10/20 EDDIE MONEY
10/21 JOHN MAYALL
10/26 DREAD ZEPPELIN
10/27 CASH'D OUT


10/3 KENNY WAYNE SHEPHERD

10/5 LITA FORD

10/6 DEBBIE REYNOLDS

10/20 EDDIE MONEY


11/3 NIKKA COSTA

12/31 DONAVON FRANKENREITER

UPCOMING SHOWS

10/28 ZACH DEPUTY
10/31 COLT FORD
11/1 SPENCER DAVIS GROUP
11/2 JANIVA MAGNESS
11/3 NIKKA COSTA
11/4 RICK DERRINGER
11/8 LITTLE RIVER BAND
11/9 MICHAEL SCHENKER GROUP w/Robin McAuley
11/10 ROD PIAZZA
11/11 ASIA (original members)
11/15 JUDY COLLINS
11/16 DAVE MASON
11/17 SUPER DIAMOND
11/28 UFO
11/29 LEE RITENOUR & MIKE STERN
11/30 DSB
12/1 TYRONE WELLS
12/14 GARY "HO HO" HOEY
12/15 TOMMY CASTRO
12/30 DONAVON FRANKENREITER
12/31 DONAVON FRANKENREITER
1/12 ABBEY ROAD / JUMPING JACK FLASH
1/21 MARC COHN
2/14 OTTMAR LIEBERT & LUNA NEGRA

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COCHINAS
perform with Bad Cop/Bad Cop and White Night at Continental Room, 115 W. Santa Fe Ave., Fullerton (714) 469-1879; www.thecontinentalroomfullerton.com. Mon., 10 p.m. Free. 21+.

When you listen to Cochinas, your mind will go to dirty places. Not like that! We're talking a hot, crowded warehouse show; a beer-swilling house party; a dive bar that doesn't check IDs—the kind of places where rules appear to be few and the disaster caused by a teenage flash mob is imminent. It's the kind of party where this OC/South Bay quartet feel most at home playing their wig-wearing, irreverent, knock-around, three-chord punk.

Confined to the velvet stage of Fullerton's Continental Room, guitarists Maria Angelica Yurko and Ana "Banana" Chong get a little cagey midway through the second set of their Monday-night August residency. Polite clapping from the growing audience doesn't appease them, so they decide to up their game for a better reaction. Laughing, slamming into each other, dog-piling and tripping over chords never looked like so much fun. Bassist Emilio Venegas Jr. (wearing a beret with a long blond wig) and drummer Anthony Gamez (looking akin to a green-haired Pippi Longstocking) get caught in the crossfire. Magically, the raw chord-ripping and gang vocals à la Bikini Kill stay relatively intact and still sound better than plenty of carbon-copy local acts who don't have half the stage presence.

"We're a fun bunch to watch, I've been told," Venegas Jr. said."There's one show we played, Banana did the splits while playing guitar. She was whipping this guy with her hair, and he actually seemed to like it."

The band of late-twentysomethings definitely get around. An unmistakable presence in the Fullerton and San Pedro music scenes, they employ boundless energy (and a gloriously dingy, gray Chevy Astro van, dubbed the "Cochina Mobile") to keep on a steady diet of shows, including their current Continental residency. Under blood-red lights, songs such as "Bitch Be Cool" and "Omaha" are given a respectable venue, which Chong and Yurko quickly defile with their empowering, skirt-raising abandon and riffs that vacillate between sugary, coy garage pop and shrill, early Misfits flavor.

Venegas Jr. has the technical classification for their sound: "theatrical, surf-pop, dirty, bubblegum punk."

Theatrical? Remember the wigs? The idea for the boys to play dress-up came from Chong and Yurko's initial desire to start an all-girl band. Apparently, this was an easy fix. Fullerton vet Yurko befriended Chong and Venegas Jr. in the South Bay area by constantly running into them at parties and shows, eventually agreeing to jam. After a brief rotation of drummers, Chavez and his machine-gun fills were added to the mix, on the condition he could rock a cheap, green wig like a man.

"We put the wig on him, and it was like Cinderella—as soon as the wig fit right, we knew it was meant to be," Yurko says.

Recently, the band popped their touring cherry after a little less than a year together, playing a barrage of shows in Oakland and Sacramento (winning support and a place to crash from Bay Area punk demigod No Bunny). Their five-song EP, released independently, is a teaser for a forthcoming album with a few 7-inch split records in between.

Their multilayered sound, highlighted by Chong's doo-wop backing vocals and Yurko's trembling, musical-theater pipes, elevate the snotty, breakneck attack of "Kittens" into a tuneful, record-ready gem.

After thriving inside a pocket of hard-charging upstarts in the house-party punk scene, Cochinas are taking their sound into some classy, OC establishments. Just so long as they don't forget to slut it up once they get onstage.

"There was one show, I remember, we forgot our wigs," Venegas Jr. says. "Worst show we ever played."

"Yeah, the wigs definitely give us our mojo," Gamez says.

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AUG 26
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9/2 Enanitos Verdes
9/7 Punkrockers.com 6th YR Anniversary Party w/ The Adicts , Brothers of Brazil, Dirty Filthy Mugs
9/8 Got OC Presents House of 80's w/ One Hot Mess, Rerewind, DJ DLP, DJ Tanner
9/9 Gig Boss Presents 27 Miles, Trailerpark Rockstar, Kettleblack, Stonebreed, The Cornfed Project
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9/18 Jerrod Niemann w/ Billy Kernkamp

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this week

THURSDAY, AUG. 23

DEREK BORDEAUX: 7:30 p.m., free. Alex's Bar, 2913 E. Anaheim St., Long Beach, 562-434-8292, www.alexsbar.com.

FATLIP: Performing Pharcyde classics, 9 p.m., free. The Slidebar Rock-N-Roll Kitchen, 122 E. Commonwealth Ave., Fullerton, 714-871-7469, www.slidebarfullerton.com.

GILDED FLICKER: 8 p.m. DiPiazza's Restaurant & Lounge, 5205 E. Pacific Coast Hwy., Long Beach, 562-498-2461, www.dipiazzas.com.

HIGH ROOTS: 8 p.m. Tiki Bar, 1700 Placentia Ave., Costa Mesa, 949-270-6262, www.tikibaroc.com.

IMAGES: 9 p.m., $5. Alex's Bar, 2913 E. Anaheim St., Long Beach, 562-434-8292, www.alexsbar.com.

JASON & THE PUNKNECKS: 8 p.m., free. The Pike Bar & Fish Grill, 1836 E. Fourth St., Long Beach, 562-437-4453, www.pikelongbeach.com.

RONCOVACOCO: 8 p.m., $15. House of Blues, 1530 S. Disneyland Dr., Anaheim, 714-778-2583, www.hob.com/anaheim.

THE STONE FOXES: 9 p.m., $10. Detroit Bar, 843 W. 19th St., Costa Mesa, 949-642-0600, www.detroitbar.com.

SCAN THIS CODE TO DOWNLOAD THE FREE OCWEEKLY IPHONE/ANDROID APP FOR MORE CONCERTS OR VISIT ocweekly.com

FRIDAY, AUG. 24

BRAD JOHNSON AND THE KILLIN' TIME BAND: 8:30 p.m., free. THE RANCH Restaurant and Saloon, 1025 E. Ball Rd., Anaheim, 714-817-4200, www.theranch.com.

DECADENCE: Presented by *OC Weekly*, 8 p.m. Fairmont Newport Beach Hotel Review, 4500 MacArthur Blvd., Newport Beach, 949-476-2001, www.shareourselves.org.

HFL: 8 p.m., $10. The Juke Joint, 735 N. Anaheim Blvd., Anaheim, 714-778-1397, www.thejukejointbar.com.

JACKSON TAYLOR & THE SINNERS: 8 p.m., free. The Pike Bar & Fish Grill, 1836 E. Fourth St., Long Beach, 562-437-4453, www.pikelongbeach.com.

MARC ANTONY: 8 p.m., $60-$421.55. Honda Center, 2695 E. Katella Ave., Anaheim, 714-704-2400, www.hondacenter.com/default.aspx.

SEGA GENECIDE: 10 p.m., free. La Cave, 1695 Irvine Ave., Costa Mesa, 949-646-7944, www.lacaverestaurant.com.

THE SHRINE: 9 p.m., $8. Alex's Bar, 2913 E. Anaheim St., Long Beach, 562-434-8292, www.alexsbar.com.

STARPOOL: 8 p.m., $12.50. House of Blues, 1530 S. Disneyland Dr., Anaheim, 714-778-2583, www.hob.com/anaheim.

311: 6:30 p.m., $25-$59. Verizon Wireless Amphitheater, 8808 Irvine Center Dr., Irvine, 213-480-3232.

THREE MILE PILOT: 8 p.m., $15. Constellation Room at the Observatory, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana, 714-957-0600, www.constellationroom.com.

UPSTREAM: 8 p.m., free. Kobe Japanese Steak House & Lounge, 3001 Old Ranch Pkwy., Seal Beach, 562-596-9969, www.kobebistro.com.

SATURDAY, AUG. 25

A FLOCK OF SEAGULLS: 8 p.m., $22.50 in advance. House of Blues, 1530 S. Disneyland Dr., Anaheim, 714-778-2583, www.hob.com/anaheim.

ADOLESCENTS: 9 p.m., $12. Alex's Bar, 2913 E. Anaheim St., Long Beach, 562-434-8292, www.alexsbar.com.

BELLADONNA: 6 p.m., free. Newport Dunes Resort, 1131 Back Bay Dr., Newport Beach, 949-729-3863, www.newportdunes.com.

BRAD JOHNSON AND THE KILLIN' TIME BAND: 8:30 p.m., free. THE RANCH Restaurant and Saloon, 1025 E. Ball Rd., Anaheim, 714-817-4200, www.theranch.com.

CANNIBAL CORPSE: 2 p.m., $32.50. City National Grove of Anaheim, 2200 E. Katella Ave., Anaheim, 714-712-2750, www.citynationalgroveofanaheim.com.

FREE MORAL AGENTS: 8 p.m., $5. The Prospector, 2400 E. Seventh St., Long Beach, 562-438-3839, www.prospectorlongbeach.com.

JULIEN-K: 8 p.m., $15. Constellation Room at the Observatory, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana, 714-957-0600, www.constellationroom.com.

MARC SEAL: 7 p.m., $15. The Coach House, 33157 Camino Capistrano, Ste. C, San Juan Capistrano, 949-496-8930, www.thecoachhouse.com.

SNAKEBIT DRIFTERS: 9 p.m., $5. Detroit Bar, 843 W. 19th St., Costa Mesa, 949-642-0600, www.detroitbar.com.

TRAVELING RIVERSIDE CIRCUS: 9 p.m., free. 13th Frame Lounge, 370 E. Whittier Blvd., La Habra, 562-526-2058.

TWIN SHADOWS: 8 p.m., $12-$14. The Glass House, 200 W. Second St., Pomona, 909-865-3802, www.theglasshouse.us.

VOODOO GLOW SKULLS: 8 p.m., $12. The Observatory, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana, 714-957-0600, www.observatoryoc.com.

SUNDAY, AUG. 26

ANITA TIJOUX: Constellation Room at the Observatory, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana, 714-957-0600, www.constellationroom.com.

THE DAMNGIVERS: 8 p.m., $5. Harvelle's Long Beach, 201 E. Broadway, Long Beach, 562-239-3700.

ERIC JOHNSON: 8 p.m., $25. The Coach House, 33157 Camino Capistrano, Ste. C, San Juan Capistrano, 949-496-8930, www.thecoachhouse.com.

WHITEBOY JAMES AND THE BLUES EXPRESS: Performing at the Real Blues Festival of Orange County, noon, $20. Malone's, 604 E. Dyer Rd., Santa Ana, 714-979-6000.

MONDAY, AUG. 27

COSMIC SLOP: 9 p.m., free. Alex's Bar, 2913 E. Anaheim St., Long Beach, 562-434-8292, www.alexsbar.com.

TUESDAY, AUG. 28

MICHAEL UBALDINI & THE LONESOME COWBOYS: 8 p.m., free. The Pike Bar & Fish Grill, 1836 E. Fourth St., Long Beach, 562-437-4453, www.pikelongbeach.com.

WEDNESDAY, AUG. 29

ABBEY ROAD: 7 p.m., $8. DiPiazza's Restaurant & Lounge, 5205 E. Pacific Coast Hwy., Long Beach, 562-498-2461, www.dipiazzas.com.

ACEYALONE: 9 p.m., free. The Slidebar Rock-N-Roll Kitchen, 122 E. Commonwealth Ave., Fullerton, 714-871-7469, www.slidebarfullerton.com.

KELLY RAE BAND: 8:30 p.m., free. THE RANCH Restaurant and Saloon, 1025 E. Ball Rd., Anaheim, 714-817-4200, www.theranch.com.

MIDNITE: 6 p.m., $18-$20. The Coach House, 33157 Camino Capistrano, Ste. C, San Juan Capistrano, 949-496-8930, www.thecoachhouse.com.

WHITEBOY JAMES AND THE BLUES EXPRESS: 8 p.m., $5. Harvelle's Long Beach, 201 E. Broadway, Long Beach, 562-239-3700.

THURSDAY, AUG. 30

COCHINAS: 8 p.m., $5. The Prospector, 2400 E. Seventh St., Long Beach, 562-438-3839, www.prospectorlongbeach.com.

DEEP STIRRINGS: 6 p.m., free. Kaleidoscope Entertainment Center, 27741 Crown Valley Pkwy., Mission Viejo.

JAMESON: Benefit for Steve Guzman, 8 p.m., $5 donation. Detroit Bar, 843 W. 19th St., Costa Mesa, 949-642-0600, www.detroitbar.com.

MAN THE STATION: 8 p.m. Tiki Bar, 1700 Placentia Ave., Costa Mesa, 949-270-6262, www.tikibaroc.com.

SO MANY WIZARDS: 9 p.m., $5. Alex's Bar, 2913 E. Anaheim St., Long Beach, 562-434-8292, www.alexsbar.com.

YOUNGBLOOD HAWKE: 8 p.m., $12. Constellation Room at the Observatory, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana, 714-957-0600, www.constellationroom.com.

X
SEPT. 7TH & 8TH

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(CONSTELLATION ROOM)

Old 97's
THUR.AUG.30TH

Kottonmouth Kings
SAT.SEPT.1ST

The Walkmen
SAT.SEPT.15TH

YELAWOLF
SAT.OCT.6TH

FRIGHTENED RABBIT
SUN.OCT.21ST

A$AP ROCKY
With Schoolboy Q & Danny Brown
SAT.OCT.27TH

SUN.NOV.11TH
MISFITS

WED.NOV.14TH
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THUR.NOV.15TH
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rock

BACK ALLEY BAR & GRILL: 116 1/2 W. Wilshire Ave., Ste. C, Fullerton, 714-526-3032, www.myspace.com/backalleyfullerton. **Thu:** 9 p.m., '80s Enough, free.

DOLL HUT: 107 S. Adams St., Anaheim, 714-533-1286, www.myspace.com/newhut. **Wed:** 9 p.m., Hump Night, free.

HOUSE OF BLUES: 1530 S. Disneyland Dr., Anaheim, 714-778-2583, www.hob.com/anaheim. **Sun:** 10 a.m. & 1 p.m., Gospel Brunch, $16.50-$36.

THE SLIDEBAR ROCK-N-ROLL KITCHEN: 122 E. Commonwealth Ave., Fullerton, 714-871-7469, www.slidebarfullerton.com. **Tue:** 9 p.m., '80s Night.

TIKI BAR: 1700 Placentia Ave., Costa Mesa, 949-270-6262, www.tikibaroc.com. **Tue:** 7 p.m., Rock Band 2uesdays, unleash your inner rock star, free.

jazz

RALPH BRENNAN'S JAZZ KITCHEN: 1590 S. Disneyland Dr., Anaheim, 714-776-5200, www.rbjazzkitchen.com. **Thu:** 6:30-10 p.m., Just the 2 of Us, free. **Fri-Sat:** 7 p.m., Kenny Sara & the Sounds of New Orleans, free.

SAVANNAH STEAK & CHOP HOUSE: 32441 St. of the Golden Lantern, Laguna Niguel, 949-493-7107, www.savannahchophouse.net. **Tue-Wed:** 6:30 p.m., Le Grand Barr.

STEAMERS JAZZ CLUB: 138 W. Commonwealth Ave., Fullerton, 714-871-8800, www.steamerscafe.com. **Sun:** 8 p.m., Evan Stone's Jazz Jam, free.

blues

HARVELLE'S LONG BEACH: 201 E. Broadway, Long Beach, 562-239-3700. **Thu:** The Toledo Show, $7.

HOUSE OF BLUES: 1530 S. Disneyland Dr., Anaheim, 714-778-2583, www.hob.com/anaheim. **Thu:** 10 p.m., Rockin' the Blues, free.

dance

THE BUTTERFLY LOUNGE: 719 W. 19th St., Costa Mesa, 949-642-2243, www.butterflylounge.com. **Sat:** 9 p.m., Plus-sized Party, where the big girls and guys come to party with the people who love them, $10.

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CANTINA LOUNGE: 2736 E. Nutwood Ave., Fullerton, 714-879-8094, www.cantinalounge.com. **Fri:** 10 p.m., Club Encore, $10. **Sat:** 10 p.m., Club Triio, $10.

CLUB RIPPLES: 5101 E. Ocean Blvd., Long Beach, 562-433-0357, www.clubripples.com. **Fri:** 9 p.m., Unzipped, girls, girls, girls. **Sat:** 8 p.m., Boulevard Nights. **Sun:** Sunday Funday, free. **Mon:** 9 p.m., Sin, with DJ Ernie Pearl. **Tue:** 9 p.m., Tipsy Tuesday.

THE EXECUTIVE SUITE: 3428 E. Pacific Coast Hwy., Long Beach, 562-597-3884. **Fri:** 9 p.m., Boy's Room, hosted by TigerHeat and POPplanet, $6.

HAMBURGER MARY'S: 740 E. Broadway, Long Beach, 562-436-7900, www.hamburgermaryslb.com. **Thu:** 9 p.m., The Doll House. **Sat:** Bear Camp, get your fill of go-go studs. **Wed:** 9 p.m., Club Lucky Wild Wednesdays, $5.

PIERCE STREET ANNEX: 330 E. 17th St., Costa Mesa, 949-646-8500, www.piercestreetonline.com. **Daily:** 9 p.m., DJ & Dancing, Top 40.

TIME OUT TAVERN & NIGHT CLUB: 27822 Aliso Creek Rd., Aliso Viejo, 949-362-5919, www.timeoutsportsnightclub.com. **Tue-Sat:** DJs and Dancing. **Fri:** 7 p.m., Ashes to Funk.

VELVET LOUNGE: 416 W. Fourth St., Santa Ana, 714-664-0663, www.velvetoc.com. **Fri:** Flex Friday.

XALOS BAR: 1160 N. Kraemer Blvd., Anaheim, 714-632-0390, www.xalosbar.com. **Fri:** 9 p.m., X-Lounge, featuring DJ Santa Rosa.

dj

AVALON BAR: 820 W. 19th St., Costa Mesa, 949-515-4650, www.myspace.com/theavalonbar. **Fri:** 8 p.m., Black Licorice, $5. **Tue:** 10 p.m., Solid State, free.

BACK ALLEY BAR & GRILL: 116 1/2 W. Wilshire Ave., Ste. C, Fullerton, 714-526-3032, www.myspace.com/backalleyfullerton. **Mon:** 8 p.m., DJ Souless, free.

COHIBA NIGHTCLUB AND CIGAR LOUNGE: 110 E. Broadway, Long Beach, 562-491-5220, www.cohibalongbeach.com. **Fri-Sat:** 9 p.m., Hip-hop, R&B, and Top 40, $20. **Mon-Tue:** 9 p.m., DJ, hip-hop, and R&B, free.

COMMONWEALTH LOUNGE: 112 E. Commonwealth Ave., Fullerton, 714-525-8888, www.commonwealthlounge.com. **Thu:** 5 p.m., Ladies' Night, with DJ Cocoe, free; **Thu:** 9 p.m. DJ Jay Scott, free.

HAMBURGER MARY'S: 740 E. Broadway, Long Beach, 562-436-7900, www.hamburgermaryslb.com. **Fri:** Boybar.

LA CAVE: 1695 Irvine Ave., Costa Mesa, 949-646-7944, www.lacaverestaurant.com. **Wed:** 10 p.m., La Cave Wednesdays, with DJ Kedd Cook, free.

OCEAN AVENUE RESTAURANT AND BREWERY: 237 Ocean Ave., Laguna Beach, 949-497-3381, www.oceanbrewing.com. **Fri-Sat:** 9:30 p.m., DJ Nights. **Tue:** 9:30 p.m., Throwback Tuesdays.

ORIGINAL MIKE'S: 100 S. Main St., Santa Ana, 714-550-7764, www.originalmikes.com. **Thu:** 9 p.m., College Night, bike night and cigar club, free.

PROOF BAR: 215 N. Broadway, Santa Ana, 714-953-2660, www.proofbar.com. **Sun:** 9 p.m., Wreck Hall, free.

SEVILLA NIGHT CLUB: 140 Pine Ave., Long Beach, 562-495-1111, www.sevillanightclub.com. **Thu:** Mecca, 18+, $5; $15 after 10 p.m. **Fri:** 9 p.m., Spot. **Sat:** 9 p.m., Saturdays Belong to Sevilla, 21+.

SHARKEEZ: 211 Main St., Huntington Beach, 714-960-5282, www.sharkeez.net. **Tue:** 9 p.m., 99 Tuesdays, '90s-themed party, free.

SKY ROOM AT THE BREAKERS: 40 S. Locust Ave., Long Beach, 562-983-2703, www.theskyroom.com. **Sat:** 6 p.m., Up Lounge.

SUTRA LOUNGE: 1870 Harbor Blvd., Ste. 200, Costa Mesa, 949-722-7103, www.sutraoc.com. **Fri:** Sutra Fridays.

TIKI BAR: 1700 Placentia Ave., Costa Mesa, 949-270-6262, www.tikibaroc.com. **Wed:** 9 p.m., Upgrade Drum & Bass, free.

VELVET LOUNGE: 416 W. Fourth St., Santa Ana, 714-664-0663, www.velvetoc.com. **Thu:** 10:30 p.m. Caliente, DJ Erikson, free.

WOODY'S WHARF: 2318 Newport Blvd., Newport Beach, 949-675-0474, www.woodyswharf.com. **Thu:** 10 p.m., Action Thursdays, free.

THE YOST THEATER: 307 N. Spurgeon St., Santa Ana, 888-862-9573, www.yosttheater.com. **Fri:** 9 p.m. Radio City Fridays, $25. **Thu:** Aug. 30, 9 p.m., Funkagenda, $15-$20.

drag

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latin

EL CALOR: 2916 W. Lincoln Ave., Anaheim, 714-527-8873. **Thu:** 9 p.m., Rock *en Español*, free for ladies before 10 p.m. **Fri:** 9 p.m., Salsa, Merengue y Cumbia. **Sat:** 9 p.m., Sabado Tropical.

SHORE ULTRA LOUNGE: 6200 E. Second St., Long Beach, 562-277-4829, www.shoreultralounge.com. **Mon:** 8 p.m., Salsa Mondays.

XALOS BAR: 1160 N. Kraemer Blvd., Anaheim, 714-632-0390, www.xalosbar.com. **Sat:** 9 p.m., Sabados a Xalos, with DJ Woody Tocando.

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savage love »

» DAN SAVAGE

I am a college-age gay male. Last year, I dated two guys. The first—let's call him Mitt—I dated for five months. He broke up with me, and it hurt as much as break-ups do, but I got over it. A few months later, I dated another guy—let's call him Paul—for a month. I really liked him, but he broke up with me, too. Then I found out that two days after breaking up with me, Paul started going out with Mitt. They knew I had dated each of them. It was the end of the school year, and I quickly left for vacation. The school year starts back up soon, and I am still pissed and hurt they are dating. Do I have a right to be? Should I just get over myself? Should I just do my best to avoid them?

Exes Became A Couple

Avoid them for now, and get over yourself.

Gays and lesbians are about 2 percent to 5 percent of the population. I'm afraid that arithmetic precludes us from hewing to the "bro code"—at least where dating friends of exes, exes of friends, or exes of exes are concerned. We simply don't have the luxury of being as rigid about this shit as straight people do. The pickings for us are just too slim.

But you have a right to your feelings, and you should go ahead and feel the shit out of your pissed-and-hurt feelings. Two guys dated you, both dumped you, and now they're dating each other. That's gotta sting. So avoid your exes for now—why salt your wounds by hanging out with them?—but resist the urge to go to war with them. Don't trash them on Facebook; don't force your friends to choose sides. Smile and nod when you see them on campus, chat politely if you're thrown together at parties, and just generally accept their relationship with as much good grace as you can muster.

Remember: The odds these guys will be together forever are pretty slim. I'm not suggesting their more-probable-than-not break-up should delight you, only that you might not want to burn bridges because—college being college, gay men being gay men—you could wind up dating one or the other or both of these guys again. Or, more likely, you might want to be friends with one or the other or both of them once your hurt has burned off.

And finally, ask yourself what you want these guys saying to mutual friends—some of whom might be gay, some of whom might be into you—if they're asked about you. Do you want them to say that when they got together, you revealed yourself to be an angry, vindictive psycho? Or do you want them to say that, although you were obviously hurt when they got together, you were gracious about it, and that while you weren't the right guy for either of *them*, you're a good guy and the right guy for somebody?

I'm a 26-year-old queer woman. I'm about to visit a friend who used to be my boyfriend and who has been my lover when we've visited each other since. Sex with him is fun for me, but it's been life-changing for him. I'm the first person he has ever shared his kinks with: age regression/diapers/submission. He has been ashamed of his kinks for most of his life, and I've been completely accepting and have helped him to get over his sense of shame. Playing this role in my friend's life is fun, sexy and meaningful for me. My own tastes, though, are more vanilla. Some of the things that would be most satisfying to me—cunnilingus, him being a little dominant sometimes and, honestly, French kissing—have been absent from our sex. He says that he wants to do for me whatever I want, and I've told him what I want as clearly as I just told you. But he seems to have some kind of a block about actually doing those things. I've tried to be very positive about oral sex and not put pressure on him, but rather let him know how hot it is for me and how fantastic it makes me feel. But so far, he just won't do it. I've also let him know that I really enjoy kissing with tongue and that it's pretty much the most arousing thing for me in the world. But he's done very little of that, too. He's aware of the inequality in what we've done for each other and acknowledges that it's unfair that he's "gotten away with it." Help!

She Misses Tongue

While I was on vacation last week, sex writer, activist and feminist pornographer Tristan Taormino filled in for me. Writing the Savage Love Letter of the Day in my absence, Tristan gave some advice to a woman in a similar situation (kinky partner being treated to first fantasy-fulfillment experiences neglecting needs of indulgent vanilla partner): "Your boyfriend has finally been able to reveal his desires and fantasies to you," Tristan wrote. "That's a big deal, and when it happens, many people can go through a phase of being selfish and self-centered."

I agree with Tristan, but I would go a bit further: Your friend—your selfish, thoughtless friend—is taking advantage of you, and as he knows you well enough to sense that meeting his needs is "fun, sexy and meaningful" for you, he figures he can keep getting away with it.

Right now, your relationship isn't characterized by a healthy give-and-take of pleasure. You're servicing your ex—or, to put it more charitably, you're doing your ex a favor. The question for you is how long you intend to go on doing him this particular favor. If the pleasure you're taking in helping him to realize his fantasies is enough, then perhaps you should keep doing him favors. But would you be writing to me about this situation if it were enough?

Early in August, a gentleman who signed himself WHACK inquired whether he should clear his browser history to keep his porn viewing from becoming known to his anti-porn wife, as the wife had noticed an empty browser history and gotten suspicious. Browser clearing is an option, of course, but most browsers also have an option that allows users to browse anonymously, Dan, without retaining any history, cookies, passwords, etc. Google Chrome calls it "Incognito," Safari and Firefox call it "Private Browsing," and Internet Explorer calls it "InPrivate Browsing." Turn it on *before* entering NSFW sites, then turn if off *after* leaving such sites, and you can build up an innocent-looking browser history without anyone seeing anything that might displease them.

Fanatic About Privacy

Thank you, FAP, for writing in—and thanks to the millions of other harried husbands who wrote in to share the good news about private-browsing features with WHACK.

To those who accused me of sex-advice malpractice for failing to mention private-browsing features in my response to WHACK: I didn't know they existed, and for that, I blame my husband. If my spouse were a smut-shaming scold who hated porn—if he were more like WHACK's spouse—I would've discovered the private-browsing features years ago.

TO MY READERS: The deadline for HUMP!—my annual, amateur-porn contest—is just six weeks away! Details about entering HUMP! and about the prizes (grand prize is $5,000!) can be found at www.humpseattle.com.

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NOTICE OF PETITION TO ADMINISTER ESTATE OF GERALDINE P. MIRAMS #LP016762
SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES. Notice is hereby given to all heirs, beneficiaries, creditors, contingent creditors, and persons who may otherwise be interested in the estate of the above-named decedent, including William Mirams (stepson), Suzanne Moyer (daughter), Kate English (friend), Brendan Butler- deceased May 27, 2012- (grandson) are required to file with the Superior Court, at 6170 Sylmar Ave., Van Nuys, CA 91401 within the later of four months after June 30 2012 or, if notice is mailed or personally delivered to you, 60 days after the date this notice is mailed or personally delivered to you, 60 days after the date this notice is mailed or personally delivered to you. A claim form may be obtained from the court clerk. For your protection, you are encouraged to file your claim by certified mail, with return receipt requested. A Petition for Probate has been filed by: Richard Neal Chadbourne in the Superior Court of California, County of: Los Angeles. The Petition for Probate requests that: Richard Neal Chadbourne be appointed as personal representative to administer the estate of the decedent. The petition requests authority to administer the estate under the Independent Administration of Estates Act. A hearing on the petition will be held in this court as follows: Date: September 25, 2012 Time: 9a.m. Dept.: NWC Address of court: 6170 Sylmar Ave., Van Nuys, CA 91401. If you object to the granting of the petition, you should appear at the hearing and state your objections or file written objections with the court before the hearing. Your appearance may be in person or by your attorney. : Attorney for Petitioner: Richard Neal Chadbourne 19907 Archwood St., Winnetka, CA 91306 (818) 854-6844.

660
Public Notices

PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice of the Initiation of the Section 106 Process: Public Participation
AT&T Mobility LLC plan to modify a telecommunications facility at:
1319 South First Avenue
Arcadia, CA 91006
The project consists of modifying the existing telecommunications facility by removing and replacing antennas on the existing light pole and installing a new equipment shelter. No alternatives to the project were identified. Public Comments for this project should be forwarded to:

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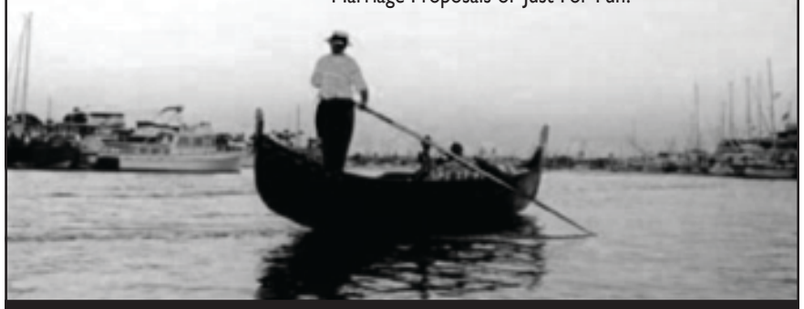

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2012

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Time: 11 am to 7 pm
www.dontheBeachcomber.com
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Hosts Brian Coakley of the Cadillac Tramps & Don Pie
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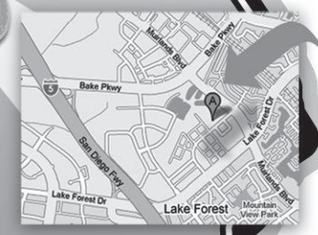

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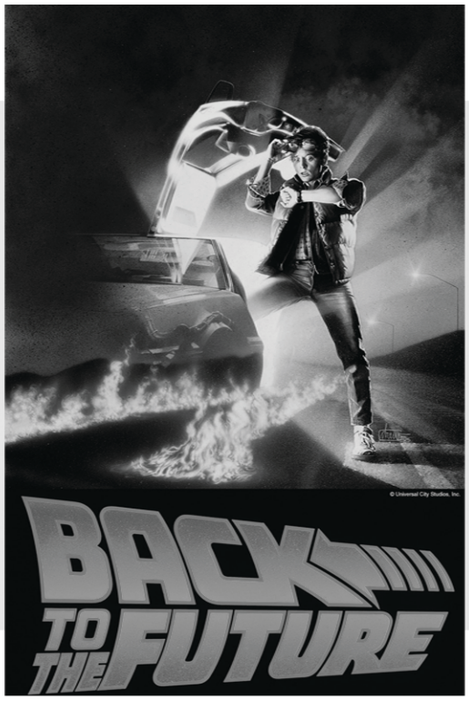

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7-10PM

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(exact time depends on when it gets dark enough)

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Aug 25 & 26
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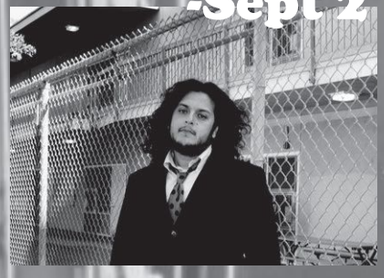
Felipe Esparza
Aug 30 -Sept 2



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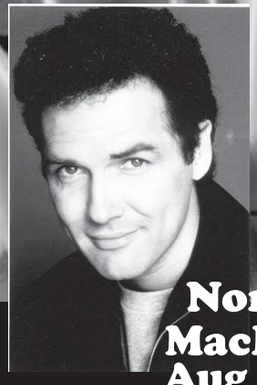
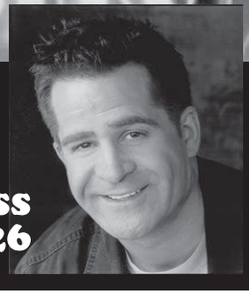
Aug 30 - Sept 2
Bert Kreischer



Norm MacDonald
Aug 24 & 25



Todd Glass
Aug 26

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